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ENGLISH FOLK



# English Folk

## *A Book of Characters*

BY WALLACE NOTESTEIN

*There is a history in all men's lives,  
Figuring the nature of the times deceased.*

HLN. IV, PT. II, ACT III, SC. I.

HARCOURT, BRACE AND COMPANY  
NEW YORK

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*first edition*

*Typography by Robert Josephy*

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

## Acknowledgments

FOR the right to use extracts from George Sturt's three volumes, *The Bettesworth Book* (1901), *Memoirs of a Surrey Labourer* (1907), and *Lucy Bettesworth* (1913), I have to thank the firm of Duckworth. If my essay about Bettesworth has any virtue, it is because George Sturt drew so careful a portrait of his gardener. *The Diaries of Lady Frederick Cavendish* (2 vols., 1927) are my source for the account of that lady and I have the permission of John Murray to use them. Other memoirs of the time have been looked through for bits of information and for impressions. In writing about Coke of Holkham I have drawn largely upon Mrs. Stirling's classic *Coke of Norfolk and His Friends* (1907-08), and the Bodley Head has been gracious enough to allow me to do so. Mrs. Stirling went over the sources thoroughly and left little for others to find, but some material published since in various places has been of use. The account of Thomas Bewick is based upon his *Memoir* (1862), but various lives and estimates have been read and the woodcuts themselves examined. Mr. John B. Beresford and the Oxford University Press have been all kindness about the Woodforde diary. Dr. R. H. S. Woodforde of Winscombe, Somerset, loaned me a photograph of the portrait of Woodforde used in this book. *The Tyldesley Diary* which was published at Preston in 1873 has been the source for the account of Thomas Tyldesley, but the Catholic Record Society and various Lancashire society publications have been studied. For the narrative of Mrs. Alice Thornton I used first of all her *Autobiography* (Surtees Society, 1875). That book was fitted together from three manu-

scripts. One of those manuscripts in her own hand and a few of her letters were loaned me by the Reverend Mr. Edward F. Comber, of Wrenbury Vicarage, Nantwich. They furnished important details not in print. The Reverend Mr. W. T. Laverick of Stonegrave Church, Helmsley, loaned me the original autobiographical diary of Dean Comber, a book that deserves publication. The story of Roger Lowe is based upon his diary, which is a remarkable document. The diary came out first in partial form in the *Leigh Chronicle* and then the complete version was privately printed by that newspaper, in a few copies and from a badly transcribed text. At my suggestion Dr. William Sachse made a careful transcription of the original, now in the Leigh Public Library, and is editing it for Longmans, Green. My story of Roger is based upon that transcription. In 1896 the Reverend Mr. Charles Kerry published in the Derbyshire Archaeological Society an account of Leonard Wheatcroft, with some of his verse. Three years later in the same society publications he brought out Wheatcroft's autobiography. My narrative of Wheatcroft's life is founded upon those two publications. Adam Eyre's Diary was published in volume I of *Yorkshire Diaries* (Surtees Society, 1877). About yeomen in general I owe something to my former student, Professor Mildred Campbell of Vassar who is bringing out a book on The Yeoman in the Seventeenth Century. The account I have given of Brilliana Lady Harley has been pieced together from the letters of the Harley family to be found in three places, in *The Letters of the Lady Brilliana Harley* (Camden Society, 1854), in the Harley Papers of the Bath MSS. and in the Harley Letters and Papers of the Portland MSS. (both Hist. MSS. Comn.). For permission to use the portrait of Lady Harley I am grateful to Lord Rodney. The account of Nicholas Assheton is based upon his diary (Chetham Society, 1848) and, for the Robinson episode, upon a Star Chamber report in the P.R.O. It is to be hoped that the original of the diary, which has been lost, and which

was somewhat fuller, will yet turn up. For information about Nicholas Assheton and for the portrait believed to be of him, I am glad to thank Mr. Ralph Assheton, M.P., of Hall Foot, Clitheroe. The Berkeley Narrative is based closely upon the *Lives of the Berkeleys* written by my old seventeenth-century friend, John Smyth of Nibley, and has been wholly prepared by Mr. Hartley Simpson of Yale University. It is his part of the book.

In the preparation of these essays I have had on one essay or another help from Mrs. W. C. De Vane, Tucker Brooke, Garreta Busey, Frank Maloy Anderson, Hajo Holborn, Mrs. Frederick Pottle, Lewis and Jane Curtis, Norman Pearson, R. J. Menner, Thomas Mendenhall, Basil Henning and Cornelia Mendenhall. About the book as a whole I have had advice from my sister, Lucy Lilian Notestein of *The Reader's Digest*, and detailed criticism from Professor and Mrs. J. E. Neale. I owe much to Elizabeth Read who has made the index and who has helped in other ways. Hartley Simpson has been at all times my most unkindly critic and a wise one. Most of all I owe to Helen Sale of Ithaca, New York, who wrote the first draft of Alice Thornton and who read the other essays and made cuts in them and additions. Her sense of the unities has served me well.





## Introduction

IT may not at first please the reader to find these characters arranged in an order that reverses the calendar, from the nineteenth century back to the sixteenth. Yet the order seems a natural one. For the political historian it is best in following a closely related series of events to move forward in order of time. Yet journalists and story-tellers are likely to begin at the conclusion or in the middle of a narrative and then go back to explain how matters came to the pass they were in. It is even the technique of some of our modern novelists. It is an order in which the mind works, from what is to how it came to be. It is the order we use in setting forth a situation to a friend; we are concerned with the present and we proceed to give it a setting.

For these essays that order seems essential. We are less interested in what happened than in certain kinds of English people, what they thought and believed, what was right and wrong to them, what was "done" and not done, how they lived with their fellows of their own class and other classes, how they looked upon those other classes and on themselves in relation to others. Their immediate circles and the boundaries of those circles are matters of import. If the narratives of their lives make stories, so much the better. But the story is subordinate to the study of a character as part of his time and class. In dealing with such matters it is easier to proceed from types more familiar to those less common to our experience.

It has seemed best, moreover, to deal with rather obscure people, and in the country. Not all of our characters are unknown, but

aside from Coke of Holkham and Lady Harley they cannot be called important people. Even those two would seldom be mentioned in the ordinary histories. As for Woodforde he has become known only since the recent publication of his diary. Country people I have chosen because it has been in the country that there have existed the characteristic social situations. London is, and has been, another world. If Coke of Holkham was often in town, he liked to think of himself as a prisoner there. Lucy Lyttelton, too, lived much in London, so much that we cannot leave out of the picture her London milieu. Her great nineteenth-century social world is part of the story of that fine, unworldly woman. But her traditions were of the country, and even her London circle had its roots in the country.

In that country there had long been a kind of hierarchy, made up of country gentlemen, clergy, yeomen and labourers, what might be called the standard equipment of an English village. There were, indeed, many modifications of those types and other types in the village and round about. Furthermore, from the time of Elizabeth on, there had been in the country, or in parts of it, a miscellaneous lot of people, retired folk, tradesmen who had done well and settled down on a piece of land, professional people who wished to centre in the country. Such people are to be found in the Worcestershire of the Lytteltons, in the Norfolk of Parson Woodforde, in the Lancashire of Thomas Tyldesley, and along those banks of the lower Severn where the Berkeleys held sway.

This county hierarchy had a long tradition. For hundreds of years there had been a degree of continuity in the classes and in their relation to one another. Naturally the country gentleman was the dominant figure, especially in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and set the standard. He and his family were on friendly and often on visiting terms with the other landed families of the county. If occasionally there was a feud between two

families that might at length split the county, that was, paradoxically enough, merely an indication of an underlying social unity.

The tie between gentlemen was even wider than the county. One reason why the Civil Wars were carried on with such civility was that throughout those struggles the country gentlemen maintained their loyalty to their fellows on either side and that their retainers were likely to give special consideration to all families of birth and name. Lady Harley could hardly believe that the good Herefordshire gentlemen, whom the Harleys had always known, were levying war upon her, and they were reluctant to do so. Mrs. Wandesford and her daughter, Alice, although cavalier in sympathy, were readily passed through the parliamentary lines.

The country gentleman was loyal above all to his class, but he did not ignore his obligations to his tenants and labourers. He made allowance for them in hard times, his wife ministered to them in illness. That was old custom in the seventeenth century and it was still the custom among old-fashioned families, such as the Lytteltons, in the mid-nineteenth century.

Sometimes, indeed, the squire or his wife took more interest in the villagers than they required. It is a good guess that Lady Harley's managing way was not relished by the tenants of Brampton Bryan. But it is in novels, which are usually based upon experience and which often tell us what the memoirs leave out, that the interfering squire or his managing wife appear at their worst.

Whatever their shortcomings, the indirect influence of the squire and of his family upon the manners of the village was usually for the good. That influence has never been enough dealt with, and for a reason: it can be more easily recognized by an observer of the country scene than proved from documents.

With the parson the country gentleman had a kind of understood relation, a relation with many degrees and variations, but that was fairly continuous. Nicholas Assheton went fishing with

the parson, had him in to dinner and accepted dinners from him. Squire Custance's house was a social centre for Mr. Woodforde and his niece. In the case of the Lytteltons the parson was a brother of the squire.

Such a relationship was common. The clergyman might be a brother, an uncle, a nephew, or a younger son of the man in the manor house. He was more often the son of the late incumbent of the living or of another clergyman. Not infrequently he was the son of a tradesman or of a yeoman. His standing with the squirearchy depended less upon his ecclesiastical status than upon his birth. At all times in modern English history the clergy have sprung from a wide range of classes.

In his relation to the people of the village the parson had pastoral obligations that went beyond his spiritual duties towards them. Mr. Woodforde called on all the sick and unfortunate and often left money with them, and he was not thus different from the better type of clergyman earlier or later. It may be further remarked that the influence of the clergyman, as that of the squire, upon the manners of the village is never to be underestimated.

The yeoman from the sixteenth century on was a fairly constant element in the English scene. Often he seemed about to disappear from the land; the students of economic history are always worried about him, and not without reason. Yet in one way or another he seems to have remained the backbone of the countryside, self-respecting, substantial, thrifty and hard-working. He left splurging to the gentry and the wearing of fine clothes as well. He looked up to the parson but was no doubt often aware that his own pockets were better filled. He cherished certain middle-class ideals that are not to be confused with those of the bourgeoisie in London and country towns. His descendants, many of them, crossed the seas and carried with them those ideals.

The only yeoman fully described in this book is Adam Eyre of

Yorkshire who kept a record of his daily routine from 1647 to 1649. But the account of him includes many of his neighbour yeomen. Other yeomen cross the pages; the yeomen who paid rent to Thomas Tyldesley and joined in merry jests with him, the yeomen who accepted farming advice from Coke of Holkham, and the yeomen who cheered the coming of age of the heir of Hagley, young Lyttelton.

The labourer was perhaps the most constant factor in the English village. His kind may yet be met with in country "pubs" and could have been met there these hundreds of years. He has been the handyman who carried on for everyone in the community. Unhappily few of his kind left records. But we have the story of Frederick Bettsworth who died no longer ago than 1905; his casual conversations with his last employer were carefully recorded and may be fitted together to make up the life and times of a labourer during the last half of the nineteenth century.

There are other types included in this volume that do not fit into the village hierarchy and yet are part of the picture of the country. The hunting gentleman is exemplified by Thomas Tyldesley in the time of Queen Anne and by Nicholas Assheton in the reign of James I. Tyldesley had such zest for good fellowship and such devotion to the chase that he might have been a dweller in any shire save Middlesex and in almost any decade of any modern century. He was actually of the remote north, and so was Nicholas Assheton. Had there been space we might have included among the hunting fraternity Squire Osbaldiston of the early and Henry Chaplin of the late nineteenth century.

One figure in this book stands by himself and yet is characteristically English, and that is Thomas Bewick. He was what the eighteenth century called an "ingenious man." He made wood engravings, but he might well have been an engineer or an inventor, or the discoverer of vaccine, or even a poet or painter.

His type seems throughout English history to have sprung up in all sorts of places. He belongs on no one rung of the class ladder, but comes in most instances from the middle classes.

So much for some of the types that are continuous in the country. I wish now to deal with some of the characters themselves and to comment upon them as examples of their class and time.

It would be hard to find a woman more Victorian in her beliefs and codes than Lucy Lyttelton who became Lady Frederick Cavendish. She was of the country-house circle, indeed of the upper ten thousand. If not one of those ladies whose beauty and rank are celebrated by E. F. Benson, she was representative of the upper-class life of her time in its less dazzling and more spiritual aspects. Upper class strictly. To be sure she had a width of sympathy for her fellow-beings that was the outcome of her training and her religion, but she was so sheltered from most varieties of English people save Hagley tenants and London poor, that she was handicapped, as many of the Victorians, in her thinking and judgments. Yet like the best of them, she was aware of some of the new ideas that were beginning to be talked about.

To compare her with the Victorian women we all know best, those in novels, is not easy. In her younger days she looked like an illustration out of *The Keepsake* or out of a volume of Tennyson's poems. None of the women in Trollope, not Lady Glencora, nor Lady Laura Standish, nor any of them that I can think of, are those with whom she would have sat down for a long talk. Meredith's women would have seemed to her artificial. She was really more Victorian than her contemporaries in fiction.

Her grandmother, Lady Sarah Spencer Lyttelton, crosses the pages of Lucy's diary so often that she may be allowed by courtesy to count as one of the characters in this book. She makes a connecting link with the eighteenth century. Her formative years were spent in the first decades of the nineteenth century that were

socially and morally a continuation of the freer eighteenth century. Her granddaughter's ideas and scruples must have seemed provincial to her. Yet she lived to be governess to the young family of Queen Victoria and to aid that good woman in setting up new moral standards.

From Lady Sarah Spencer Lyttelton to the seventeenth century is a long jump backward. Alice Thornton died in the reign of Queen Anne less than a hundred years before Lady Lyttelton was born, but Alice was born a year after Charles I took the throne and her early youth was spent in a north-country environment that was still Elizabethan. A more typical woman of the Stuart period is not to be found. In her backgrounds of Yorkshire gentry and London wealth, in the ups and downs of her existence during the Civil Wars and Interregnum, in the arrangement of her marriage, in the fearful experiences of bearing children and the memory of those ordeals, in the decayed gentility that followed the wars, she exemplified the "passages" of her generation. Through increasing poverty she was borne up by pride in remembered prestige and by confidence in Him who did all things well. Next to godliness was gentility and next to that, a due regard for deeds and dower rights.

Katherine, Countess of Berkeley, was a Renaissance figure mislaid in the deep country, a London bird of plumage caged in a Gloucestershire tower. Some magic out of an earlier day there was about her, but she was Tudor in her grasp for money and reality. Power she craved more than was thought becoming to her sex. Next to power was the dignity of her rank, and she guarded it as she did the recesses of her spirit.

From ladies we turn to the great lords. The Cavendishes figure only as part of the story of Lucy Lyttelton. With five great houses and a ducal title, they were among the families that dominated Whig politics in the nineteenth century and set the tone in town



and country. They went into politics naturally and as naturally were given office. Without such fine left-overs of feudalism to look up to the Victorians would have deemed their world unstable.

Coke of Holkham belonged to the same aristocratic Whig tradition. No doubt he had talked with Lady Sarah Spencer at Althorpe before she married and became a Lyttelton, for her mother, the Lavinia Lady Spencer of Sir Joshua's portraits, was one of his intimates. The friend of Fox and for years of the Whiggish Prince of Wales, Coke moved among the patricians of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. His household was on the grand scale. The stately homes of England, now many of them boarded up or turned into schools or quiet shelters for Wodehousian characters that have felt the stress and strain of modern life, remain monuments to a way of living that will hardly be forgotten when it shall have become an anachronism. Coke was eighteenth-century, too, on another count; he was one of the great exponents of the new agriculture.

The Berkeleys were pre-Stuart. For centuries they had ruled the vale between the wide Severn and the Cotswold plateau. By the second half of the sixteenth century their fortunes were already on the wane, but they had not lost the last enchantments of the Middle Ages. As they returned from their journeys they would be met at the boundaries of their domains by hundreds of their retainers. It was a custom only just going out that the church bells should mark their progress from village to village on their way toward their castle. More at home they would have been with the Mowbrays and Plantagenets of the dim centuries than with the Cokes and Cavendishes of the well-lighted ones. Yet they were no more mediaeval than the Perceys of their same Tudor day in Northumberland.

One parson only is to be found in this book, but he is one that may well stand for his kind. Thanks to his five-volume diary,

James Woodforde is likely to be remembered longer than any other village clergyman except George Herbert. It was the opinion of that observant labourer, Bettesworth, that the country was eaten up with parsons, but he was speaking of the late nineteenth century, and his opinion was not uncoloured. Certainly, however, the English landscape has long had among its typical and visible features the clergyman. He may be seen walking across the common, or moving genially round the garden party, or conducting a burial service. Mr. Woodforde in his eighteenth-century Norfolk village must have been as visible as any of them. He was a black-coated embodiment of that century with its distrust of enthusiasm and its satisfaction with the world it knew. No less representative were the men in the Woodforde circle: the small clergy and great clergy; the squires and their kin; the well-to-do families on their solemn progress towards gentility, like figures a little later in Jane Austen; and the Norwich bourgeoisie.

Thomas Tyldesley, although a hunting gentleman, is a characteristic type for another reason. He was a Catholic. We must not forget how many old families, especially in the north-west of England, had continued in the old faith. If they were usually Jacobites, their faith in the Stuarts was to become a cause hallowed in song and ballad. If their sons, many of them, crossed the Channel to study for the priesthood and brought back to Lancashire some Latin grace, the families never lost their essential Englishry.

Tyldesley was of the early eighteenth century. To most of us Queen Anne means Addison and Swift, pamphlets and party controversies, and possibly issues long dead. Tyldesley was far removed from that London world in a Lancashire backwater of tenants, jockeys and innkeepers, such folk as were to fill the novels of Fielding.

Three men in this book belong to the lower classes, Roger Lowe

and Leonard Wheatcroft of the seventeenth century, and Frederick Bettesworth of the late nineteenth.

Lowe was a shop-keeping apprentice in the reign of Charles II. In his diary he managed to give away all that was in his peasant soul and also to furnish us with an intimate record of village goings-on. A nonconformist youth with convictions that demanded utterance, he was at his best at a prayer-meeting, or in theological controversy, but no less happy in the alehouse or on the bowling green. He was always in and out of love and so affords us many a hint as to the peasant formulae for courtship. So trusting was he and so expansive that he must have been laughed at for miles around. But his friends laughed with him, too, and went out of their way to spend an evening in his company.

In the same part of the same century flourished Leonard Wheatcroft, a village tailor and doer of odd jobs. Like Roger he gives us a clue as to the customs among simple people of his time. But he himself would have been at home in any modern century, or even in a Dickens setting, and was only of the seventeenth century as it impinged at all times upon him. Much he had to go through. More than once he was in gaol for debt; often he was in straits as to where to find food and shelter for his family, but his difficulties were to him a series of adventures. He belonged to that class, as Bettesworth in a later century, who have had to shift from one job to another and have not known from one week to the next what was ahead of them. One advantage they have had over the secure classes; they have been seldom bored. Leonard was usually hoping for something around the next corner and moving by zigzag courses towards that corner. All the voyage of life he relished, even the last stages, and had eventually that satisfaction in memory which the French say is the best reward in life.

Bettesworth lived two centuries later than Lowe and Wheatcroft and his lot was even worse. He had none of Wheatcroft's

gusto and little of Lowe's gregariousness, but from his long, hard days he had gathered some wisdom and a little philosophy. In his rambling conversations were now and then sentences that come close to poetry. He saw, however dimly, the changes taking place among his own kind; he lamented the passing of the old type of labourer who had pride in his special skill and a sense of duty to his work. To him, as to the men he had grown up with, work was always interesting and the more interesting because difficult. He liked to recall hard jobs: gathering hops in the wet and cold, carrying a heavy load of stone up a long ladder, cleaning out a cesspool, or going to the bottom of a three-hundred-foot well.

His work had been no more exacting than that of working people in an earlier time. The common labourer had never been blessed with short hours. He seldom asked for such hours or complained of his inferior station. But one cannot refrain from wondering whether his status had not declined. Had not the esteem for him and for his type of service become less?

As one compares the relation of classes in the nineteenth century with that in the sixteenth and seventeenth, one begins to suspect that the difference between high and low had been accentuated, that the higher had been exalted and the low brought lower.

No doubt there had always been great economic differences and seldom greater than in the Tudor and Stuart periods. The Elizabethan cottager lived just above the margin of existence, at least in some parts of the country, and the Stuart shepherd had little luxury. But a man was a man for all that, and the least-paid labourer in the country was a recognized part of the scene; he was befriended by the Asshetons and Harleys; he was mentioned in the letters of the Gawdys and the Barringtons. In the nineteenth century the labourer seems to figure less. It would be putting it too strongly to say that, to the classes above them, the labourer had become less a fellow-creature than a part of the mechanics

of living. But certainly his status was less than it had once been.

The yeoman, too, had apparently lost status. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the line between small gentlemen and well-to-do yeomen was in some places a narrow one and easily crossed, and many a thriving yeoman bought his coat of arms from the heralds. The circle in which Adam Eyre moved in the West Riding, the Mickelthwaites, the Riches, the Wordsworths, and the Appleyards, was made up of families on the boundary between yeomen and gentlemen. When Adam himself came to die, they set down on his tomb, after his name, the word "generous," that is, gentleman. He would have sought no such appellation, but neither would he have been surprised by it. But even in districts where yeomen and gentlemen were not so near in fortune, it did happen that gentlemen married yeomen's daughters. By the nineteenth century all that had been changed. In manners, in education and in accent the difference had become so great that marriage between a yeoman's family and a gentleman's would occur only in a play.

The good feeling between classes in the old time appears in many places. Leonard Wheatcroft was only a tailor but he believed himself widely befriended. He could not praise enough the gentlemen of his part of Derbyshire. They were his good friends, and so were less important people. Roger Lowe had no money, and his wages in the shop were little better than those of a good servant. Yet nothing is clearer than that he had friends among all sorts of middle-class people in all the country round. Classes mingled easily because the status of each was understood and the attire of each marked off definitely. The good fellowship can be read between the lines of a score of plays.

When did all this change? Was it at the end of the eighteenth century and at the beginning of the nineteenth? A good deal of evidence to that effect could be brought together, but it cannot

be marshalled here. We must assume that such a change did take place, and at about that time, and speculate as to some of the reasons.

As the run of gentleness grew richer, they had too much land and too many tenants and servants to keep the old intimate relations with them. They were likely to leave their duties on the land to stewards and subordinates and to give themselves up to the enjoyment of their wealth, to the pleasures of the chase and to a wider social connection. Hunting gentlemen were no new thing in the nineteenth century, but at that time they became in many of the counties almost a dominant type.

Gone was the old tough-minded gentleman of Tudor and Stuart days who looked after his lands himself and so knew every inch of them, and who kept an eye upon his neighbours and the King's inquisitive officials lest they should find a way of encroaching upon his acres. That gentleman had to be on the job, he had to know his tenants, each and every one. It was natural for him to do so, for as a boy he had studied with them at the little grammar school and had perhaps fished and fowled with them.

But the new squires of the nineteenth century, many of whom had little knowledge of their fields save of the coverts and fox-holes, who kept stables and followed races and had town houses, were another lot. They had been educated at the great public schools where they had met only boys of their own breed and were out of touch with work-a-day people. To be sure there were great landowners who patronized agriculture and went out of their way to treat their tenants as friends, but they were seldom able to know them as men concerned in the same problems.

Moreover, the new squires were so occupied with their pleasures that they were not as bookish or learned as the squires of old. The works of Selden, of Chillingworth and Locke might still be on the shelves of their great rooms, because they had been left there by

their ancestors, but their tables were more likely to be covered with sporting novels. And there is something about learning that is preservative of a democratic attitude.

Other factors explain the change in the attitude of the gentle class towards their inferiors. As they grew rich from the spoils of the industrial revolution they spent more of their time in London where they were naturally out of contact with those who did the rough work. The urbanization of England carried city notions even into remote villages, and the two Englands divided off from one another, that Disraeli lamented, became evident in the country as well as in manufacturing districts.

Imperialism played its part. The men who lived in India and had grown used to native servants brought back a different attitude towards those who waited on them. The effect of the empire upon British character in the nineteenth century is a subject that has never been enough studied. The training in the public schools, which, in spite of the age of some of them, were really a new feature of the nineteenth century, was designed to make men reserved and superior beings fitted to dominate inferior races. Even the Latin classics were used to inculcate the imperial ideal, and the Kiplings and the Newbolts were to lend that ideal poetic sanction. By one means and another—we have to leave out many factors—there was imposed upon the upper classes, and in consequence upon the upper middle classes, a manner that set them off from those who had once been their retainers and even allies.

This change can of course be exaggerated, and the reasons for it. With all that has happened in our hard modern world, there are still gentlemen on the best of terms with their tenants and friendly to the labourers, still gentlewomen on the lookout for all around them, whose sympathy is bounded by no lines of accent and speech.

And here we would turn from the consideration of classes and

the decline of natural friendliness between them to a more general topic, to some differences between the English of three centuries ago and those of our day, to differences that transcend class. Let us put ourselves for the moment in one of the modern rooms of the National Portrait Gallery and then move from those rooms to the Tudor and Stuart rooms.

One's first impression is that there is more peace and quiet certainty in the old faces, but more differentiation of character and more shading in the modern. That is no doubt in part because the painters of an earlier time wanted skill in putting experience and memory upon canvas. Was it possibly because the people of an earlier time lived in a simpler way and had less breadth of experience? Is it too much to imagine that the faces of those predecessors of ours by thirteen or fourteen generations, country people most of them on the northern frontier of Europe, had less written on them?

Exceptions occur to one at once. Huysmann's portrait of Izaak Walton shows a face as complex and modern as those in the nineteenth-century rooms. And some of the countenances of the men and women of the Court have much to say, if we were only able to read it. Furthermore, such faces as those of Sir Christopher Wren and Sir William Petty, if no way modern, betray nevertheless minds of reach and complexity. Other portraits in other places are exceptional. Holbein's painting of Sir Thomas More and his drawing of John Fisher have not a little to tell us about what men have gone through and about their relation to God and their fellow-men. And sometimes a sixteenth-century face carved in wood under a Dorset church roof or a little stone figure of a veiled woman in a Somerset church betray satisfaction with success or suffering bravely borne. Yet such faces in the older time are rare.

If art gives one the impression that our forefathers had less complex experience than we, their diaries and letters and auto-



biographies seem to say the same thing, even when one makes allowance for the brevity and terseness of those records. None of the mediaeval figures of English history come alive even in the best historians. And the Wolseys and Walsinghams of the sixteenth century and the Falklands and Hampdens of the seventeenth century will always seem hazy personalities beside the Samuel Johnsons of the eighteenth century or the Gladstones and Disraelis of the nineteenth. It is not merely a question of fuller details. When we think of that individual of the seventeenth century who told most about himself, Samuel Pepys, we have to admit that compared with the diarist Greville, of the early nineteenth century, he was a simple unsophisticated soul.

What we have said applies to the figures in this book. As we move backward from the nineteenth century to the sixteenth, we become aware that our characters are less susceptible of analysis and understanding. They are, of course, all of them, fairly unimportant people, intentionally so. It is to be said that Leonard Wheatcroft, Roger Lowe, and Brilliana Harley were not lacking in character or outline, yet even their personalities were simpler than those of our time. And Alice Thornton, Adam Eyre, and Nicholas Assheton seem out of a world with less to think about. No doubt they found it unnatural to put themselves on paper. But there is more to it than that. Their philosophy was standardized and of a piece; the individual had not yet—or rarely—made his own attempt at truth and unity. Their faith was more readily useful than ours, their passions more immediate and more easily shifted, like those of the young; their codes more black and white, their aspirations more in a straight line, their pleasures less sophisticated and often childlike.

We have no sooner ventured on such contrasts than we are brought up sharp by instances that do not fit. What are we going to say about Hamlet? Was he not as complicated a personality as

we can come upon? To say that he was conceived by the subtlest of men is hardly an answer, for Shakespeare, like other authors, was drawing more or less from originals he knew. And there may have been other Hamlets of whom we shall never know; indeed the chances are that if Hamlet had stepped out of Shakespeare he would have looked, in his presentment upon the wall, like any ruffed Elizabethan, or if he had kept a diary or written letters, he would have told us less than nothing of his hesitations.

And it is not only in the mind of the supreme poet that we can find characters of complicated personality. Brillianna Harley's brother, the second Lord Conway, was a man of puckishness and humour that make him a delight to read and raise a score of modern questions about him. And the adorable Dorothy Osborne left letters so whimsical and full of implications that the doubting historian looks again and again at her handwriting in the British Museum to make sure that he has not been tricked. She fits into no formulas and belongs in no regular seventeenth-century frame.

Another doubt might be raised. Is the difference suggested between our ancestors and us a matter of lighting? The man of today has so much more illumination turned upon him. His associates have infinitely more means of interpreting him, and he himself has become more introspective. Knowledge and science have made possible more methods of analysis and have stimulated the individual to analyze and complicate himself. Might it not be that if we could apply the same analyses to our ancestors they would seem as complicated creatures as we?

What shall we say in answer to these objections? Shall we admit at once that Shakespeare transcends the ages, or shall we attempt to show that his characters want something of modern complexity, that modern commentators have read much more into them than the author saw himself? Shall we say that Lord Conway and Dorothy Osborne were exceptions, or shall we try to indicate that

even in their cases there was much that marked out both of them as of a simpler world? Shall we grant that the difference between us and our ancestors is a matter of the light focused upon characters, or shall we assert that all the apparatus of knowledge and science would not have made those ancestors the many-sided personalities of today? Let all the modern psychologists turn their light upon every word of Pepys, let them endow him, too, with those powers of self-analysis that are ours today. Yet his traditions and his experience would seem limited by the side of a modern man in similar circumstances.

It is best to leave the answers to these questions to the reader who in such disputable matters will have to form his own opinion. But that reader must remember that we are a long way from the Middle Ages, and that from the Renaissance on to our day, the individual has been coming into his own. It is no matter for surprise if now and then a special personality of an earlier time seems to fit into ours.

Our time has problems not more difficult or heart-breaking, but with less ready answers. We have scores of earthy considerations to reckon with and are encompassed with foes we cannot estimate, economic forces and psychological paraphernalia that still smell of magic. We are forced to think more quickly and to look in more directions at once than our ancestors. If our personalities are no deeper than theirs, indeed sometimes more diffuse, ours have more breadth and more variety of surface.

The world that enfolds us has seen to that. The generations have accumulated ideals that affect us, new sensitivenesses, new forms of highmindedness, new realizations of duty, new possibilities of fairer judgment, based upon new psychology and a better understanding of evidence. If there are also many new forms of tawdriness and vulgarity of which the earlier centuries never dreamed, there are new reaches of virtue and sacrifice.

The men of old were more immediately brave and more ready to take on the dragon. We have to consider so long before we decide which is the dragon, and so riding against him demands more stability of soul. One wonders, indeed, whether the men who could hold fast in an earlier generation would not under the impact of confused forces today lose their integrity. To do right and fear no man calls for more discrimination and so finer courage. To live unselfishly today is less a matter of giving up to those we love, an easy thing, than of giving up to those we have come to realize are our brothers, however little we love them.

Looking out for those brothers may eventually force us to yield some of our slowly-won individualism. We may have to return to the ways of our forebears and fit into simple categories.

Those forebears in any case served to build up an English tradition. The great lord, the lady-of-the-manor, the hunting squire, the clergyman, the nonconformist shopkeeper, the tailor, the man-of-all-work, the ingenious man, and many other types passed on techniques of living, philosophies of their work, and codes of behaviour to their kind. It is true that such traditions have been occasionally perverted or lost, but more often, like common law, or constitutional principles, they have been added to, broadened and refined until in their sum they make up the English character.

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## Bettesworth

BETTESWORTH belonged to the lowest class in the English country. All his life he was a labourer, a labourer who did odd jobs of many kinds. It is a type to be found through the annals of England, the least changing type of all, and the one least affected by changes around it. The country labourer had a hard time in the reign of William the Conqueror, when he was called a serf; he was the concern of the Tudor rulers; and he has been a problem to the reformers of the twentieth century. Though ages pass, he remains as he was. The visitor in Britain sees little of him, unless he happens to walk through field paths. There the traveller can meet him sometimes in search for a job, broad-shouldered and deferential, or in small village pubs can hear him talk of calves and pigs and soils, and possibly his last rabbiting.

Bettesworth's full history we do not know; only such fragments as he chose during his last years to tell to his inquisitive employer. That employer happened to be a man of understanding, who by experience could sympathize with the poor, and at the same time describe his encounters with them. In three volumes which are now pretty well-known he put down extracts from Bettesworth's book of days. They are not arranged in any order, and it is possible to fit them into order only with some effort and a good deal of guesswork.

Bettesworth was born sometime in the late eighteen-thirties and somewhere in Hampshire. It was near Farnham on the Surrey edge of Hampshire that he spent most of his life. That town is best known as the birthplace and home of William Cobbett who had

gone on his rural rides and observed the poor in the fields. We know nothing about Bettsworth's parents, but they were probably farm labourers. Both of them died when Bettsworth was very young, and left what little they had to an older son. Fred Bettsworth was taken in charge by an uncle who went around the country in a travelling van. At first the uncle was kind to the boy, but it was not long before he took to beating him, until young Fred, who was fond of horses, almost ran away with a jockey. But his uncle was able to hold on to him for a time, long enough to teach him to fight for his own. His uncle was always in fights himself, and used to threaten the lad that if he failed to thrash other boys, he would kill him. "So what could I do?" Fred learned to take care of himself, but not to love his uncle, from whom he finally made his escape. He found employment with a farmer, like the Farmer's Boy in the old song. At twelve years of age he was working for Farmer Barnes at Penstead in Hampshire, to the southwest of London. Fred liked to recall his days with the farmer: "If ever I was at work anywhere near the sheep-fold, I'd be sure to slip over an' steal a swede to give to my 'orses. The old farmer—he wouldn't say nothin' so long as you done it open; but if he caught ye sneakin' it down so's not to be seen, then he'd let ye have it!"

Those days working with horses had been agreeable. Mrs. Barnes bought decent clothes for Fred, sent him to night school, and treated him kindly. He had already in some way been to school, and had learned a little arithmetic, less reading, and still less writing. In his old age he remarked of his youth: "I likes to hear of a boy eager for learnin'." He remembered that he had not been too eager himself, and had often "clucked up to" a tree to avoid school, but he had been driven there just the same.

Mrs. Barnes sent him on errands, for which he would be rewarded at the other end with a bit of money, which came in

handy, for his wages were only thirty shillings a year, out of which he had to find some of his clothes. Mrs. Barnes would not allow the boys to smoke—and they would smoke anyway—but she left a pleasant place in his memory.

Sometimes he went to fairs in the country round about. There was a fair at Basingstoke where young people came, as they had long been coming, to hire themselves out for the next year. "I went once when I was a nipper—went away from Penstead; but I never got hired." The fair was gay with youngsters who had just taken a shilling as evidence that they had accepted an employer for the following year; they went around telling one another of the new job they had taken, and asking the luck of their friends.

There were other fairs, Newbury Fair, Reading Fair, and Weyhill Fair. Fred remembered Cunnin' Jack, who played bells on the concertina: "Blue Bells of Scotland," too—to hear him play that, an' the chimes, jest exact!" Cunnin' Jack was in great demand, with no less than three or four innkeepers trying to get hold of him.

The fair at Weyhill near Andover was an annual event in Bettesworth's early days. He used to drive a wagon of hops down to the fair, where there was a reward of ribbons for the first load of hops to arrive. "I've drove all night, purty near a trot, purpose for to git the ribbons. There's four bunches o' ribbons for your 'orses. . . . You should see our old Miss laugh when we come 'ome with the ribbons." One old custom at the fair lingered in his memory. At an inn in Weyhill two horns were mounted so that a man dubbed the "colt" could put them on his head while singing: "There was a little place in 'tween the horns, purpose for to put a half-pint cup full o' beer in. Him what 'ad the 'orns, he used to have to sing this here song; and then he had to pay the fine if he didn't sing it right." The song was as follows:

So fleet run the hare, so cunnin' run the fox,  
Why should not this young calf grow to be an ox?  
For to get his livin', through briars and through thorns,  
And die like his daddy with his long pair o' horns.

Horns, boys, horns!

Horns, boys, horns!

And drink like his daddy with the long pair o' horns.

By and by Fred left his place with Farmer Barnes at Penstead for a similar one with a brother, old Jimmy Barnes. But the work was heavy. One day Fred was carting hop-poles miles from the farmhouse, through a road knee-deep in mud. Even though two horses were drawing it, the load stuck. After six attempts in the snow and ice to unload and reload the hop-poles, Fred got them home, but it was too much. On a Sunday morning he went off without a word to his master. He pulled up on Staines Bridge across the Thames, many miles away on the road towards London. A man came along and asked Fred what he could do. Before he could believe it he was hired to drive two horses. "They was bigger 'n any I'd ever had to do wi'. . . . However, I took 'em into London next mornin', right into Smithfield Market, loaded with hay and corn." With that master he stayed three years, then was off again. "He wanted me to stay; but I had a kind o' roamin' commission." Fred walked all the way down into Sussex, forty miles away, where he felt sure he would find his brother; within two days he had a job as a reaper. "But that was my way. I'd be savin' up money, an' then go off an' see the country." He did see the country that way, but of course it was the reason he was never to get on in his little world.

At sixteen he was off to the Crimean War. Bettsworth was there two winters and a summer. He slept with fifteen others in a tent. "Cold an' starvation. I've bin out on duty forty-eight hours at a stretch; then march back three mile to camp; and then

some of us 'd have to march another seven mile to fetch biscuit from the sea." He saw all the terrors of that mismanaged expedition, and came home in a troop-ship with seventeen hundred other soldiers: "Forty-nine days we was, comin' home. And she leaked, an' then 'twas 'all hands to the pumps.' . . . Great pumps."

Bettesworth had told his story of the Crimea only when he had been asked for it. He had before then kept away from the subject, as if it were something about which he did not care to talk. His employer, after his death, discovered from another Crimean veteran that Bettesworth had got into trouble going with some others into the French lines after some rum. They were stripped and given two or three dozen lashes apiece. The shame must have lingered in Bettesworth's memory.

Sometime in his early years, just when he did not say, Bettesworth spent some years in the north of England, "an' nobody didn't know where I was." He was in various places, Carlisle, Newcastle, Tynemouth, and Liverpool. At another time he drove a milk-cart for two years around Winchester barracks. Wherever he wandered, he was likely to find his way back to Hampshire, to Surrey, or to Sussex in the summer, where he could find reaping to do. One harvest time he arrived at Birdham, four miles on the other side of Chichester, and looked over a gate to see his brother Harry and another chap.

"'Ullo!' said his brother, 'where d'you spring from?'

"'Out o' the road,' replied Fred.

"'Where's your kit?' he says.

"'On my back,' I says.

"'Got any vittles?' he says.

"'Ah, in my belly,' I says. 'An' ther' wa'n't much o' that, neither.'

"'Where's yer reapin' hook?'

"'En't got ne'er a one,' I says.

" 'Well, d'ye want to work?'

" 'Oh, yes,' I says, 'I'll *work*.' . . . Well, from there I went off again, after a week or two, runnin' loose. But I never used to tell 'em wher' I was goin' to. No, ther' wa'n't no need for that."

Bettesworth ran loose, but many a summer he turned up in the South Downs, not far from the Channel. He thought of himself as a Farnham man; he was proud that Farnham men were always welcomed by the Sussex farmers and were able to find work quickly. The new faghook that the men of Farnham introduced into harvesting was deemed superior.

It was a diversion for the men of Farnham, though it was a long journey over the waste and rough hill of Hindhead down to the "manor of Sussex," to the land around Chichester, Bognor and Selsey. Sussex farmers were well liked and on the whole paid well. For the reapers there were new people to meet, new inns to talk in, and new fields to cross. It was no easy thing always to find one's way through the fields to the home farm at night. One was likely to be held up suddenly, as one trudged fast across the quiet evening fields, by a "rife" or salt-water ditch. It might mean miles to get around home. But the pleasant evenings spent talking to Selsey fishermen about smugglers and pirates brought enlightenment to Bettesworth's mind.

He liked to take his wife down to Sussex with him. "Five-an'-twenty year she went wi' me reg'lar. Used to git as fat's a pig a'ter she'd bin down there a week or two. At 'ome I've knowed when she wouldn't eat, nor yet 'ave half a pint o' beer in two days; but she wa'n't down there long afore she'd take it o' mornin's for breakfast 'long o' the rest. And eat too! . . ."

The little dark woman he had married after his travels, and from that time he gave up his roaming commission to settle down in a rude valley to the north of Hindhead and south of Farnham. It was in among the North Downs that cross Hampshire and



Surrey, a range of hills that run up to six or eight hundred feet, covered with woods, heather, and gorse. The soil is sandy but in some of the valleys suitable for cultivation. Bettesworth's wife had been Lucy Harding, the daughter of a cotter of the valley, a good-natured man except when he was drunk. Bettesworth and Lucy took a cottage across the lane from her mother, a little one-storeyed house of three rooms with a garden in the rear, where they grew wheat and onions.

They shared Mrs. Harding's troubles with a drunken husband. One night when she was at Lucy's cottage, Harding came for her, and receiving no answer, started to hunt for her with a lighted candle in his hand. A second son-in-law, Hall, knocked the candle down, but was promptly felled by a blow on the ear. Then Bettesworth intervened. "I was strong then. I jumped up and took hold of 'n by the throat, and lifted 'n out o' the door, and chucked 'n over the hedge down into the lane. Wonder 's 't hadn't broke his neck. He laid there bellerin' like a bull, and half a dozen old women come runnin' out and stopped me, or I should ha' went for 'n again."

One day Harding showed a spark of some old manhood. He went into the room where his little boy lay sleeping, stroked his face in farewell, came out and cut his own throat. Bettesworth went off to a village a few miles away to fetch the other son-in-law. "'Arry,' I says, 'the old foreman bin an' done for hisself.'" The two men had beer at every public-house they came to, treating the pony as well. "We both got as boozy as billyo on the way home."

The Bettesworths had two children, a boy who died on Candlemas Day at the age of a year, and a girl who lived only four weeks. Fred always remembered the second of February, but grew philosophical about the loss of his children: "Very likely 'twas

best for 'em, poor little things. They was spared all trouble in their lives."

We do not know much of Mrs. Bettesworth's middle years. Bettesworth respected his wife for her strength and endurance. "Strong as a little donkey," he once boasted. "See her out with the sheep-fold, liftin' they great hurdles, and then go out and cut up a bushel o' swedes, and out with it for 'em. Strong as any *man*! . . . No mistake, she 'ave worked 'ard." At another time he said of her: "I've knowed my wife since we bin married, come 'ome with daglets of ice 's big 's yer thumb hangin' from her skirts. Yes, daglets of ice. That was trimmin' swedes, with men goin' in front of her to sweep the snow away from 'em. Well, *somebody* got to do it; if they didn't, th' sheep 'd starve."

Bettesworth's middle life witnessed few adventures, but involved work of many kinds. He had jobs on the repair of buildings, which taught him something about using ladders. "'Tis a smartish job, two men shiftin' a forty-round ladder." Fred once carried three hundredweight of stone up a ladder when they were repairing Middlesham Church. "I'd carry up as much as two men could load up on my back. Not takin' hold of it, ye know; but leanin' over an' holdin' the ladder wi' my hands. . . . And I was gwine up the ladder wi' this yoke one day, and about half-way up, one o' the chains broke. The end what was left on whipped round an' caught me behind the ear—it made my old head rattle. 'Have it hurt ye?' Jenki'son says. 'Tent done me no good,' I says."

If Bettesworth had the worst jobs going up in the air, he had no better going down into the earth. A well over at Summerfield went bad. "Nobody else wouldn't go down 'n; but I says, 'I don't care,' and I went down. Half o' the top of 'n was under the scullery, so there was on'y jest room for a man to scrouge down in. But I got astride 'cross the stick put over the top for me to start

from; and Mr. Maitland he says, 'Have you said your prayers, my man, before venturin' your life down there?' 'No, sir,' I says, 'I whistled 'em afore I started.' 'Now there's a man!' he says." After Fred had got as near the bottom as he could, and seen the condition of the well—it had not been examined for eighty years—he gave the signal for the four men at the top to draw him up. Just before he got to the top he threw his slimy cap down the well. " 'I dropped my old cap,' I says, when they pulled me out. 'Never mind your cap, my friend!' says Mr. Maitland. 'If you be come up all alive and sound yerself,' he says, 'I'll find ye a hat.' An' so he did, an' a good un, too. He give me a soft black hat as was worth a crown. 'You rascal!' Steve says, 'you done that o' purpose.' 'I *knows* I did,' I says."

The job of hop-picking which Bettesworth would take on in September sounded better than exploring three-hundred-foot wells, but was hardly more agreeable. The weather was nearly always wet, and early in the day Fred would be soaked through. His job consisted in pulling up the poles with the hop-vines on them, to take them to the pickers. The hop-pole would shower down from its mass of leaves a drenching water on the pole-puller. The worst of the work came in the evening. Horses could not be used on the hop-ground, hence all the newly-picked hops, emptied into coarse open bags, had to be carried out of the ground to the waiting wagon. Two men would lift the bag, containing fifteen or sixteen bushels, into Bettesworth's hands, while the water would squeeze out a pailful at a time. Then he carried the load through the sticky clay to the wagon. After fifteen hours' labour, he walked two miles to his cottage.

It must not be supposed that Bettesworth was sorry for himself. He was often tired, indeed almost worn out as he grew older, but he was proud of his work, and of his ability to endure hard labour. This same ability he admired in others. He said of Ed-

mund Baxter, the gardener: "Always a good 'n for work, was Edmund. He used always to get up Sundays jest same as week-days; it didn't make no difference—about four or five o'clock he was up, feedin' and workin'. But there, that was his way; he was *reg'lar*." He approved too of those who were skilful. The men who showed special knowledge, either self-acquired or picked up from others, were those about whom he liked to talk, Edmund Baxter with his information about soils and gardens, old Billy with his skill in managing horses. This represented learning to him.

He had a reverence for his tools. He had lost his shovel for a time, but it had been returned. "No, he en't like yourn. Yours is one o' they patent ones. Got a holler back. But this is a very nice shovel. Got such a good lift to 'n. I lent 'n to Jimmy Cook up 'ere at the gravel pits a week or two ago. A lot of 'em up there fell in love with 'n. I says, 'I don't care as long's you brings 'n back.' . . . The best shovel as ever I had—oh, he was a purty tool an' no mistake!—he was as big as this, but as light . . . ! Got wore *reg'lar* thin he was; an' 't last I lent 'n to a man, an' he got 'n on to some big stones, an' the edge of 'n chinked out. 'R else I never had a nicer shovel than what that was. I got 'n down 'ome, now."

The new young fellows who did not know how to do a job, without direction at every point, were objects of his scorn. In Bettsworth's old age, the little valleys in between the downs were filling up with that type of worker. His contempt for Biggs, a neighbour of his, was boundless. "He won't work. If ever he got at a job, 'bout eight or nine o'clock he'd want to go an' sit down. . . . They be all alike, all them Biggeses. The doctor never 'ad to bleed none o' they for a strain. They won't work." Biggs did get out in his garden one day, whereupon Bettsworth commented: "Well, then we be *bound* to have some rain, after that. I do believe he's the laziest feller as ever Gawd put a gut into.

To my knowledge he ain't done no work this last two year. An' that poor old woman got to slave about an' do it all."

"But how do they live then?" asked his employer.

"Parish!" replied Bettesworth.

"Parish?"

"Ah. It never ought to be allowed. I heered a man tell 'n so straight, on'y yest'day; and that was Brixton up 'ere, the post-man. I heered 'n say 'twas a shame as we should 'ave to work an' keep such as he. Oh, there's many a one talkin' 'bout it, that the parish should help 'n. An' yet ye see, he can afford to buy manure, an' pay a man to work his garden for 'n. No, 't en't right; a long ways from it."

Bettesworth, like everyone else, reasoned somewhat from his own life. A man should work, but he should be competent to do many kinds of things, in many kinds of places. He knew a man named Vickery who had worked all his days on one country place, as a boy tending sheep, as a man managing the gate-house, finally taking over the electric lighting and the chopping of the firewood. "Why, if they was turned out they wouldn't know how to go about. . . . They hadn't looked out for themselves; their fathers had always got the work for 'em, and law! they didn't know where to go no more than a cuckoo! But I reckon that's a very silly thing."

A change brought enlightenment to people's minds, he would insist, "enlightenment" being a favourite word of his. There was a young man in the community who had gone off his head with religious mania. "Yes," commented Fred, "I've knowed a many have it; and then they gets over it after a time. Get 'em away,—that's what it wants. If they can get 'em where they can dummer somethin' else into 'em, then they be all right. Wants to give 'em a change so's to get a little more enlightenment into their minds."

He did not confuse enlightenment with education. That was a

good thing too. "Nobody ever ought to be against schoolin'. . . . Yes, a good many is, but nobody never ought to be against it. I don't hold with all this drillin' and soldierin'; but readin', and summin', and writin', and to know how to right yourself . . ."

It will be remembered that his vagrant uncle had taught Bettsworth that he must be able to put down the other man in a fight, a part of his education that had become an item in his creed. A fight was just his clip, he used to tell his employer. Once when a baker had got down out of his cart to make Bettsworth move his wheelbarrow, Bettsworth had knocked him down. His employer, fearing that he was getting old, advised him not to get into unnecessary trouble, but Bettsworth pleaded that a fight seemed to do him good. It acted as a tonic on his system. Even as an old man, he got into an encounter with a labourer who was maltreating his family. The man was powerful, and had a local reputation for being a bully. Bettsworth threw him out of a public-house one night. "I cut 'n heels over head, an' when he got up, and made for the doorway and the open road, I went for 'n again. They got round me, or I should ha' knocked 'n heels over head again. I broke my way through four or five of 'em. 'If I was twenty years younger,' I says to 'n, 'I'd jump the in'ards out of ye.'"

Bettsworth had his opinions about religion and about death. "Nobody don't know nothin' about it. 'Ten't as if they come back to tell ye. There's my father, what bin dead this forty year. What a crool man he must be not to 've come back in all that time, if he was able, an' tell me about it. That's what I said to Colonel Sadler. 'Oh,' he says, 'you better talk to the Vicar.' 'Vicar?' I says. 'He won't talk to me.' Besides, what do he know about it more 'n anybody else?" One time when Bettsworth was ill, a neighbour remarked in a manner characteristic of such people: "You ben't goin' to die, be ye, Freddy?" Fred answered: "I dunno. Shouldn't care if I do. 'Tis a poor feller as can't make up his mind

to die once. If we had to die two or three times, then there might be something to fret about." In telling this story to his employer, he added: "But nobody dunno *when*, that's the best of it."

One Sunday Bettesworth was "huckin' about" in his garden, when the curate came along. "He stopped an' he says, 'Bettesworth, I wish this 'ere Sunday work was done away with altogether.' I looked at 'n an' I says, 'Well, sir,' I says, 'if it was, I dunno what in the world'd become o' you.'" When clergymen were mentioned Bettesworth would become agitated. "Pa'sons! We're eat up wi' pa'sons! . . . What do 't want o' so many pa'sons? If there's one in a parish, just to do marryin's and buryin's and christenin's, that's enough. But now if there's a pa'son in a parish, he must have a curate. . . . And what good do't do? If a man don't know right and wrong hisself, the pa'son en't no good; and it don't matter for a man to know more than that, and to know how to right hisself." He went on to discuss a visit Colonel Sadler had paid him when he was ill. The Colonel touched on religion, which was the wrong tack. Bettesworth made it plain that as far as he was concerned, "for these lords and so on 'tis all very well to have their fal-de-rals, but everybody don't want it. . . ."

He had given thought to class distinctions and to his own humble state. "No, cert'nly, puerty en't no crime; but it is a very ill-convenient thing, an' no mistake." It was, however, part of a natural order. "No, sir, you *can't* all get on and prosper. I've heerd 'em talkin' about the army, what a fine thing it is. But you can't be all colonels and officers and non-commission' officers—there must be privates too. And the same with we. We can't all be lords, nor we can't all be tradesmen. There must be some of all sorts—it can't be no other than that. Some's one thing and some's another. And so long's you knows right from wrong and how to take care of yourself, it don't matter what you be."

Bettesworth's talk was likely to drift back to the state of his

garden and that of his employer. It had been a dry summer, and the whole community of cotters was on the lookout for rain. Bettsworth pointed out how much use in such a time was the working of the soil. "I never sim'd to notice so much before as I 'ave done this year how it 'elps the ground to keep the top of it worked." Of potatoes he observed: "I don't hold with cuddlin' taters, not in any ground, and 'specially when 'tis light like ourn." His employer feared the rain was all gone again. "I don't think so, sir. I've great faith in that rainbow what I see this mornin'. Goo! He *was* a purty thing!"

His employer liked to watch Bettsworth in the garden. His earthworn clothes seemed to belong to the scene where he was working, and his quiet chatter to the pattering of the warm rain. Sometime in the spring his work kept him at it so late that his wife complained he was too tired to eat. "It's true," he admitted. "The more I works the less I eats. . . . No, nor I don't sleep, neither. If I got anythink on my mind, I can't sleep. I seems to want to be up and at it." Next morning he was at it very early, raking over the potato ground.

He reflected on the ways of working men. "Cert'nly, after a man bin to work all day, when he gits home he's tired, and wants to go to bed. But Saturday night and Sunday—well, you can't bide indoors solitary, lookin' at the fire. If you do, you never learns nothin'. But to go and have a glass and a pipe where there's others—that sims to enlighten your mind." At the pub neighbours were likely to compare notes on their gardens. "Well, then, if I was you, I should dig that ground up now—rake off the stones. Then, if it comes rain, that'll settle it a bit."

The time came when Bettsworth was forced to give up his cottage to a neighbour who offered higher rent. He did not wish to go to the upper end of the valley where there were more cottages, because it was peopled by labourers from the town who had



none of his peasant traditions. "They be a roughish lot up there," he remarked. Moreover, he wished a cottage near his work, so that he could come home at midday and see how his wife was getting on. She was growing feeble, and was subject to epileptic fits. The cottage he did take was little better than a hovel, previously occupied by a completely shiftless outlander. "I think," said Bettesworth, "I can make it comfortable. Ye see, there en't bin nobody to try before." He did succeed for a while in making the place fairly livable. The cabbage plot, which had been a tangle of stunted cabbages and weeds, became in time filled with pinks and nasturtiums. He took soil from the lake below him and enriched his garden with it.

But he was getting old, and misfortunes began to gather. His wife broke her wrist, during one of her fits, and there seemed to be nothing for it but the infirmary. Bettesworth had had her there once before, and brought her home in three days, so bad were the conditions. But now he could not take care of her himself, and he could scarcely ask his neighbours to do it. Going through the preliminaries of getting her in again was a heartbreaking business. There was endless red tape: a certificate from the doctor, who lived a mile and a half away; an order from the relieving officer who lived two miles in the opposite direction; an order from the work-house master; and finally the problem of a conveyance to get her there. Fortunately she grew better, and the matter was delayed for a time.

But other troubles came upon him. His cottage fell into new hands, and he could get no repairs. His employer managed to get him into a cottage near the big house, only to have him told shortly he would have to go. He did not understand why, because he had grown too blind to observe that his wife had become utterly squalid. Even when his employer gave him friendly hints, he was unable to see that she had become a dreadful apparition. "What

can I do, sir?" he asked. "I know she en't like other women, with her bad hand and all. But I can't afford to dress her like a lady."

What her husband knew was that she had worked hard, as had her mother and sisters. "Never no gals worked 'arder than them—and their mother too." He respected that history of effort. About the immediate problem of what to do with her, he was troubled. "I sits ponderin' and ponderin' for hours, and dunno what to do for the best. . . . I don't hardly know how to go on. She en't fit to be left alone. Manys have said so to me, and I knows it. But I dunno what to do. She sits there moddled up over the fire, swayin' herself to and fro. Got such a fearful pain in the chest, and her heart's so bad. . . . After I got home last night, I sit down watchin' of her for p'r'aps two hours, till 't last I couldn't bear it no longer. I was *obliged* to git up and go outside and walk about. . . . 'Tis two year now since I've had any what you can call rest with her. But they says you takes 'em for better or worse; and she bin a good mate to me. That's why I hangs on to her. If she'd bin one o' these harum-scarum ones, then I shouldn't trouble; but she bin as good as gold to me."

His employer finally managed to find the Bettesworths a place to live in a cottage owned by a friend who understood the situation. But Fred was unhappy; he no longer had a view from his house; he was aware of his neighbours' resentment, and his wife grew steadily worse. She insulted the few friendly folk who reluctantly entered the filthy cottage in an effort to be helpful. A few months later she became so seriously ill that the infirmary was imperative. Bettesworth spent two days without food or sleep attending to his wife while he waited for the doctor. She died a few days after her removal to the infirmary. Fred's employer looked after the necessary details. "Nothing sensational happened," he wrote, "nothing extravagantly emotional. But all that he did

and said, so simple and unaffected and necessary, was done as if it were an act of worship."

Things went better for Bettesworth after that. His neighbour, Mrs. Norris or old Nanny, as he called her, kept an eye out for him. In the morning she gave him a cup of tea; he made no fire and so saved coal. Sometimes when he came home at night, he found she was getting his dinner, and had made his bed. "But I give her a shillin', so she can't go about sayin' she done all this for me for nothin'. . . . No mistake she is a one to work! Works as hard as any young gal—and she between seventy an' eighty."

In January, 1905, Bettesworth was seized with a bronchial cold. He managed to do one day's work for his employer, but he became seriously ill. It became evident that the only place for the old man was the workhouse. As he was carried out of his cottage, women and children gathered around. They looked upon this as the end of Bettesworth; they were interested in the cottage, in his belongings, and in the post of gardener that might now be vacant.

He was not happy in the infirmary. He told his friend that he would never get well as long as he stayed there. Everything was wrong: he was too subject to orders, he felt himself a prisoner, and he hated to see people dying all about him. After two weeks of misery he went to stay with his nephew Jack, where he could have a nice soft bed. Meanwhile those of his neighbours who had helped him, Old Nanny and the others, turned against him. He was so dirty, and so seemingly ungrateful for their help. In their opinion he should have stayed in the infirmary. His employer realized how much truth there was in these complaints, and knew as well how desperate was the plight of the old man. Loneliness and despair had brought out some innate savagery in him.

Bettesworth managed to get around again, "white, weak, pathetically docile." He had been worrying about the money he owed his employer, who had paid his back rent; he tried in an inarticulate

way to express his gratitude: "You done a *lot* for me, sir; more 'n you any call to. And I thinks of you . . ." There was still a spark in him of his old interests. He chatted about various things: the tools of a man's trade, for instance. He was living with a basket-maker, and enjoyed watching the man work: "The tools are 'sharp as lancets; and every tool with a special name for it.'" They talked of the dying art of making rush collars, which led Fred to speculate on other arts that would eventually be lost, because the few men who understood them kept the secret to themselves. "Same as them Jeffreys over there t'other side o' Moorways, what used to make these little wooden bottles you remembers seein'. They'd never let nobody see how 'twas done. . . . There was them blacksmiths over there, again—*they* wouldn't allow nobody to see how they finished a axe-head. These Jeffreys never done nothing else but make these bottles, and go mole-catchin'. Rare mole-catchers they was: earnt some good money at it, too. . . . I never knowed nobody else catch moles like they did, but they wouldn't show ye how they done it, or how they made their traps."

Bettesworth grew worse as the spring advanced. "I prays for 'em to carry me up Gravel Hill," he declared, which was the way from his dwelling place to the graveyard. Men of his own class told him bluntly when they dropped in to see him how sick he looked; his employer tried to cheer him. He spoke of how from the hilltop across the valley there was no part of the landscape to be seen in which Bettesworth had not worked. "Yes," said the old man, "for a hundred miles round."

It was at the end of July that he finally died.

His last days had been hard. He lived before the era of old age pensions and the social reform policies that have lightened a little the burdens of the poor. But his life on the whole had been a happy one, or so he said, because he had enjoyed his work. "A

man's never so happy, to my way o' thinkin', as when he's goin' to his day's work *reg'lar*." And another time he said with a chuckle, "I be never lonely. When you be at work there's always something to interest ye, with the things growin' and so on. I *do* like to see anything grow."

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## Lucy Lyttelton

IN the year 1855, eighteen years after her accession to the throne, Queen Victoria gave a children's ball at Buckingham Palace in honour of the four-year-old Prince Arthur. Among the guests there was no one happier than Lucy Lyttelton, thirteen years old. She wore a muslin frock trimmed with ruches, white silk stockings, white satin shoes with white bows, white kid gloves trimmed with daisies, and most satisfying of all, her hair had been arranged by a professional hairdresser! She watched the Princes enter the gallery, Prince Albert leading Prince Arthur by the hand. Presently the Queen herself came up to where Lucy stood; of this supreme moment Lucy wrote in her diary: "Oh, ecstasy, she shook hands with me!" She was moving in a fairy-tale world of which most girls only read.

She had been born into a fairy-tale setting. Hagley Hall was a large sandstone house with low towers at each corner, in the midst of grassy slopes. These slopes were so broken with rounded low-branching trees, each set in its proper place sometime in the eighteenth century, that the whole seemed to fit into a frame of a rural and yet highly civilized England. Lytteltons had been there longer indeed than the landscape. Since the great Judge Littleton of the fifteenth century there had been Lytteltons of worth and note in north Worcestershire. Lucy's father was the fourth baron. Her mother was the daughter of Sir Stephen Glynne, whose family had been important on the Welsh edge of Cheshire since the seventeenth century. Through her mother Lucy was re-

lated to four prime ministers, and through her father to many of the great families of England.

From her late childhood in 1854 until the beginning of her widowhood in 1882 Lucy kept a diary. It is the picture of the life of a woman of the most privileged class in England; the story of a group that was close to Gladstone and powerful in the Liberal party; the record of the changes taking place in Victorian England, and the personal history of a woman of character, spirit, and idealism. Lucy Lyttelton was not a typical Victorian, but she typified some of the best features of the Victorians. She was a Lyttelton, with their deep religious feeling, almost puritan in its devotion and austerity, with their breadth of intelligence that was a family tradition out of an older England. But she was herself, too, with her own outlook and opinions, considered and reconsidered and adjusted to her time.

The Glynne side of her must not be ignored. Her mother had been one of the two beautiful Glynne sisters. Back in the early days of the nineteenth century Catharine and Mary Glynne had been visiting in Italy when they happened to meet the two young travellers, Lord Lyttelton and William Ewart Gladstone. Gladstone was so much impressed with Catharine's religious spirit that one day in the Coliseum he asked her to marry him. She never ceased afterwards to regret that she had delayed a few weeks in accepting him. Some weeks after the engagement was accomplished, Lord Lyttelton rushed up to her and announced that her sister Mary had just promised to marry him. The two girls fled to talk it over, and Gladstone promptly had Lord Lyttelton on his knees in prayer. The two sisters were married to the two friends at the same service in Hawarden Castle, the Cheshire home of the Glynnes, and the two couples drove away in opposite directions, but after a few weeks continued their honeymoons together.

Mrs. Gladstone had eight children within thirteen years, and



Lady Lyttelton twelve within eighteen years. These two families were far closer to each other than cousins usually are. The children spent most of their holidays together. With each other they used a kind of language called Glynnesse, of which Lord Lyttelton made a dictionary. The Glynne background affected Lucy not only by inheritance, but by its connection with the experiences of her entire life. To her last days there were Gladstones around her, and where there were Gladstones there was activity and politics.

There was another element in her background. Her father's mother, Sarah Lady Lyttelton, was a Spencer born of the Spencers of Althorp. "Granny" came to Hagley for long visits, bringing presents for each of the children. She would hang a handkerchief out of the window as a sign that she was ready to read to them. A tall woman with a great deal of dignity and a low voice, she was an old lady to be revered, and at the same time loved for her liveliness and character. She was conscious of a certain flabbiness of nose, which once led her to remark, as she looked down the long row of her descendants at the dinner table, "To think that I am responsible for all those profiles!"

Lady Lyttelton was a connecting link with the past, as her published letters show. When a little girl at Althorp she had received her first arithmetic lesson from the historian Gibbon. She had grown up in a world very different from that of her granddaughter Lucy, a world left over from the eighteenth century. As a young woman she had been less concerned about duty, which was to later Lytteltons the stern daughter of the voice of God, and more interested in amusements and gaiety. She had been brought up with codes that were perhaps more realistic than those of the later part of the century. She had not been pained that the young men she knew had affairs with women. Her "not respectable cousin" was no less interesting on that account. That the men she

knew got drunk caused her little worry. She had taken her world as she found it.

But Lady Lyttelton was called upon to adjust herself to another world. When at the age of forty-one, a widow and the dowager Lady Lyttelton, she had been offered the post of lady-in-waiting to Queen Victoria, she commented to a friend: "The character of an adviser, a woman of influence, a probable preserver or improver of the *national morals* is exactly *the very last* I could fill decently." It was easy to see what the Queen expected of her; Lady Lyttelton realized that if, when her task was over, she could return to her quiet and her cross-stitching at Hagley with a clear conscience, she would be lucky. She became governess to the royal children, and in spite of her own misgivings, did the job admirably. "Laddle" she was to them, and "Laddle" she remained even when they were grown up. But she paid rather heavily for the affection of the royal family. She was a woman who craved clever, amusing people around, whereas life at Windsor was not wholly made up of that type. The Duke of Cambridge, himself no centre of radiance, was likely to blurt out at dinners: "How do you get on here? Rather dull, hey?" Even the Iron Duke, the great Wellington, shouting and demanding gossip as if he were giving orders, was not stimulating. If Lady Sarah had a chance to listen to Macaulay in full flow, or to the ingratiating Wilberforce, there were few such opportunities. Tedious people and amusing, they were all grist for her letters; if she could not have fun with them, she had fun about them afterwards. As one reads her many letters during these years at Court, one realizes that she was a wise overseer of the royal children, a sophisticated and enlightened woman who must have filled a place at Windsor, a spirit, too, of lightness and humour in those great rooms where heavy Hanoverians looked down from the walls.

From this charming grandmother Lucy Lyttelton may have

inherited her ability to express herself in writing. The child began her diary when she was not yet thirteen. The first volume has been lost, but the second deals with the excitements of the schoolroom and the joys of the outdoor world. She recorded the doings of the rabbits and the new little pigs. She played cricket with her brother, rode with her father around Clent Hill, "through lanes, on heaths, by farmhouses, cornfields, and grass-fields; through villages, amongst donkeys, cows, sheep and horses, and—home." This was the period when she was taken to London to see the Queen.

Her studies took up most of her time. She read Shakespeare in a bowdlerized version, and was pleased with *Othello*, *King Lear* and *Hamlet*; *All's Well* she thought rather coarse. During a London visit she heard Fanny Kemble read *Lear*, which fully answered her highest expectations. She studied Italian twice a week with her governess, whom she described as "a nice real comfortable English one, ladylike and pleasant-looking." Among her tasks was a translation of Bossuet's *Histoire Universelle* into English and back into French; an abstract of Arnold's *Rome*; the reciting of Racine's poetry, and the reading of Longfellow's. With an enthusiasm more genuine than distinctive, she adopted as her motto "Excelsior!"

On New Year's Day the whole tribe of Gladstones poured into Hagley; there were eighteen children under seventeen, followed by two more cousins the next day. The children were set down at two tables at meals, a governess presiding over one, Meriel, Lucy's elder sister, over the other. Lucy wrote, "The meals are the fun," but even more thrilling was the play. All of them were in it, the smaller children taking the part of fairies, and "all these are getting up their parts in different ways."

This year was also marked by the first great sadness in the family. In February there was a new baby, the twelfth child, who was to be the Alfred Lyttelton of twentieth-century politics. Lucy was old enough to be aware of the danger to her mother, to await

the event with anxiety, and to have a good cry when it was over. Her father boasted that it would be difficult to find a man a few weeks under forty with twelve children and not a noticeable grey hair. It was seldom the men who grew old from having children. A few months later Lady Lyttelton became alarmingly weak. In August Lucy wrote: "It is of no use—God has set His seal." Lady Lyttelton kissed her children good-bye, took the communion with the older ones, and lay peacefully, waiting the end. Lucy took her mother's death quietly, but she remembered the day all her life.

The following year was distinguished by her gradual emergence into grown-up society. She dined with her father at the Bishop of Worcester's, and for the first time was bowed to when she left the room. There was another day when she ordered dinner for the first time. As she contemplated her seventeenth birthday, she wrote: "Oh, the deep sadness of the flying years!" Her father took her on a tour of country houses, where she attended formal dinners and played games for money, also for the first time. The child enjoyed practising her grown-up part, but was constantly apprehensive that she might do something wrong. At Christmas time came the first ball, "chaperoned by Papa and Aunt Coque. . . . We were not in bed till past 3, nor up next morning till 11½! It felt so dissipated." The following May, Lucy was introduced at a London ball, and was fairly launched.

The London social world opened before her, the art exhibitions, the opera, the opening of parliament. She was presented by Mrs. Gladstone, her "aunt Pussy," to the Queen, who inspired in the seventeen-year-old Lucy the same rapture that had been aroused four years before at the children's ball. Some of the parties she attended were a great success; others, sad to relate, were dismal failures, the criterion being the number of times she was asked to dance. With all the social excitement, however, Lucy was becoming interested in the political scene. Bred a little Conservative, she

wondered how her uncle, Mr. Gladstone, could take office under Palmerston.

She was always glad to get back to Hagley, to ride through sprouting wheat and up grassy slopes, and marvel at the view from High Down. She gloated over the coming of spring, which she describes with a girlish enthusiasm: "Hedges breaking out here and there into precious little ducky tender green baby leaves." Hagley meant more opportunity for reading; she finished Bourrienne's *Napoleon*, which convinced her that the Revolution had robbed France of all vigour. Granny read them *Adam Bede*, which she found full of dreadful interest, a "heart-rending book, with its stern true moral of the irrevocableness of sin."

Its irrevocability was all round her in the village, as the squire's daughter was beginning to learn. It was her duty to talk over parish matters with her Aunt Emmy, the wife of the rector. "6 people prayed for; 4 expecting babies, 3 of whom are anxious cases; . . . little Wright children with disgraced father, mad mother, and no money; little Shilcocks ill with the dregs of scarlet fever; and to wind up, a bewildering bother about Annie Farmer—who we trusted was off our hands." The woes of an English feudal village were becoming real to Lucy, and were accepted by her, as by everyone else, as part of the natural order.

It was also part of the natural order that she should have the gaiety that was the prerogative of her class in youth. She went to Lord's to see the cricket, and was disappointed that her brother Charles was out third ball. She dashed home to lunch, and was off again on the four o'clock train to a "breakfast" at Ashridge. Such breakfasts in the evening had been a social routine since Granny was a child. Ashridge was still one of the great country places of England, and there were eight hundred people present, many of whom were friends of the Lytteltons. The guests walked, talked, ate cold meat and listened to the Grenadier band. In the evening

the dancing began, but many people preferred to sit in the brilliantly illuminated gardens. Lucy danced, to her delight, with the Comte de Paris, claimant to the French throne. The Lytteltons arrived back in London at two of a Sunday morning, feeling wicked that society had made them trespass on the Sabbath.

The marriage in 1860 of her sister Meriel left Lucy the eldest of the children at home. From the beginning Meriel had been much in Lucy's narrative, the "aged Meriel," more careful and less lively, less enthusiastic than Lucy, expecting possibly a little of the deference due to age, but a sister to whom Lucy was devoted and with whom she had shared all the delights of rides in the country and parties in the city. In May Meriel became engaged to John Talbot while on an expedition to the Crystal Palace, and was married in July in Westminster Abbey. But Meriel was by no means lost to Lucy even as a matron. She had one baby after another, all of them much beloved by their aunt; she became amazingly dignified, and often served as chaperon for Lucy. She was in and out of the Gladstone circle in London and with Lytteltons at Hagley in the country, never far away from her sister all the days of her life.

Meanwhile Lucy had to look after the ten smaller children at home. She watched the health of each, she was interested in their looks and in the way the boys got along with other boys. Her brothers figured much more in the diary than her two sisters, Lavinia and May. The oldest boy, Charles, was at Eton, and was playing cricket, as Lytteltons from youth were expected to do. The management of Hagley was no small job for Lucy. She had her share of troubles with servants and arrived reluctantly at the conclusion that there was no common Christianity among the servant class. She was just at the beginning of her thinking about the lower classes.

She was still concerned to be a proper young lady of her station. We have noticed that she was always under a strain in

country house visiting lest she should make a blunder. She was at Brighton with her family—people of her kind still did go to Brighton—and she walked along the pier by herself, which she suddenly realized was “scampish.” She went to an afternoon church service and had to walk home alone, but pretended to belong to two elderly ladies in succession, who happily never found out that they were escorting her. When her aunt went to the opera Lucy did not go along if there was to be a ballet. She was to be a sheltered young woman and she was eager to be so sheltered. It took pains and thought. One day she jumped into a hansom cab with Meriel—to go to a church service—and was seen getting out by a young lord of her acquaintance, an episode that distressed her, for young women of her sort were not supposed to go out in hansom cabs. Another time she went to the house of Miss Coutts to hear the great tragedian Fechter, then the talk of London, read a particularly scampish French play. The whole party, she wrote, sat on thorns and a bishop or two stalked out.

But Lucy was not making much fun of the bishops. The Church was at the centre of her life. Every service meant for her not only high emotion but memory of some former service. Any attack upon the Church hurt her; the news of free thinking among the young men at Oxford was alarming. When on a visit to Oxford she met the great Jowett, Master of Balliol. He seemed to her to have a mild intellectual face and it was hard to think of him as a tamperer with the faith, as “he *must* be called.” Jowett was one of a group who brought out a volume, *Essays and Reviews*, in which there had been an attempt to reconcile the new geology and the new historical criticism with the Bible.

Society was taking up much of her time. A dance at Carlton House was a great success, because she had “innumerable partners,” among them the Comte de Paris. His attentions gave her a “stomach-ache of thrill.” She visited at Lord Denbigh’s country seat and

was one of the two hares in a paper chase, the son of the host, Colonel William Feilding, being the other. She went to Althorp, the famous home of the Spencers in Northamptonshire, where Granny had lived in her youth, and a paradise for hunters. Lucy preferred to stay at home and talk with the ladies of the household. She was bridesmaid at the wedding of her cousin, "figged out in tarlatan trimmed at the bottom with light green *battlements*, a geranium wreath, a tulle veil flying behind, and a pretty locket." She went to Hawarden, now the home of the Gladstones, and engaged in skating or "sliding." From a picture of the skating, the editor of the diary concludes that the young men wore high hats. She went, as all her friends did, to hear Jenny Lind sing; the three songs that especially delighted her were the "Land of the Leal," the "Last Rose of Summer," and the "Reaper and the Flowers."

Her life was not so gay that she overlooked the troubles of the time. Coventry, Bedworth, and other towns near Hagley were dismal with the miseries caused by unemployment. The newspapers told of the distress among the homeless poor. It worried Lucy, who could not understand why nothing was done about it. She was beginning to reflect on the contrasts between classes; yet she knew enough of the stolid poor in the country to be somewhat sceptical about efforts to help them. What she read made her uneasy, lest there be a French Revolution in Britain. It was the Church in which she put her trust, the Church which she believed was working against the evils of the time. Mighty prayers, she hoped, were shielding her country.

In 1863 Lucy had great news to put down in her diary. On the tenth of June she heard that Granny had a letter asking if Lucy would accept a post as maid-of-honour to the Queen. Granny wrote that Lucy "shrieked and kicked and jumped about between delight and fright." Lucy in her own account admitted no such behaviour, but wrote that she had a headache from the overpowering



news. She was afraid that she might make blunders, she hated to miss her holidays at Hagley, but she was delighted at the prospect of £400 a year of her own. She would be off her father's hands. Her family considered the matter, as if it were not already decided, and declared that Lucy would be taught order and obedience and a certain liberality of mind from contact with many kinds of people. Letters of congratulation poured in upon her.

Meanwhile the round of country-house visiting was resumed. At Hawarden she danced with Lord Frederick Cavendish; at Cliveden she met the Duke and Duchess of Argyll and was taken aback to find them both pro-north in respect to the war going on in America. She had never heard that side supported and she wished she could hear some of the arguments. From her youth on Lucy had a suspicion that there was something to be said on the other side, and listened to hear it. The Duchess of Argyll was Scottish and possibly the most intelligent woman Lucy had yet met, a woman whose talk was of books and politics.

She was away for a visit in the north. Sooner or later English people start intently for an excursion to the Lake Country in Westmorland and Cumberland, and set down faithfully in their diaries or letters the glories of the lakes and fells. A crowd of young and old started up Conistone, but a heavy rain came on—as usual in that corner of England—and all turned back except Lord Lyttelton, whose sense of duty took him to the summit. Lucy's comments on the Lake Country were much like those of everyone else, raptures over the rushing waters, the towering peaks, and the deep valleys.

From the Lake Country Lucy and her father went on to Brougham Castle, where the old Lord Brougham, once Lord Chancellor, was sadly living out his last years. The next stop was Hawarden, enlivened by the brisk efforts of Mrs. Gladstone to improve the lives of the poor. Aunt Pussy was busy making work for the un-

employed, by getting walks and roads built, supervising a soup kitchen, training factory girls for domestic service. After Haxton came Chatsworth, the chief seat of the Cavendish family, whose head was the Duke of Devonshire. The Cavendishes seemed formidable to Lucy, especially the Duke and his eldest son, Lord Hartington. Of the second son, Lord Frederick, she seemed less afraid.

From country-house visiting they came as always to Hagley. Here Lucy was mistress, here she had her brothers to guide and teach; here she delighted in the society of her father. It has been said by a biographer that the Lyttelton home was, during the time of the fourth baron, the centre of intellectual life in Worcestershire. That may very well have been true, and yet Lord Lyttelton was hardly more than a dabbler in matters of the mind. A good man he was, in the old meaning of the word, with that sense of duty still becoming in country gentlemen. Rain or shine he would go to church; for thirty years he conducted with great regularity a Bible class which he once admitted he did not enjoy. When he visited Brighton he would find out a church with a daily service, a place to play billiards, and an old woman to whom he could read. He knew many things in an amateurish way. He did many things, useful things. But there were behind him too many generations of ancestors who had not been enforced by the discipline of a hard existence to have to do things well. In that respect he was the product of his class, though one of the best products. They were thorough in one respect, however, their sports; the Lyttelton boys were brought up to believe that next to their religion, the fundamental duty of a Lyttelton was to play cricket well.

But the elements were mixed in Lord Lyttelton, and along with duty and religion went a spirit of roguery. Once when Archer Clive was visiting him, and dining with him along with his

brother, Lucy's Uncle Billy, the vicar of Hagley, the conversation was on high matters, when suddenly without a word of warning Lord Lyttelton flung his napkin, made into a hard ball, at the face of his nearest son, uttering a roar. It was a signal, and the younger members of the family, who had been making similar weapons of their napkins, began shouting and throwing the balls at one another, as only cricketers could throw.

In September, 1863, Lucy entered upon her duties as maid-of-honour to the Queen at Windsor. After her first dinner she was summoned to the Queen's presence. She marked the dignity and grace of the Queen, and the stamp that grief had set upon her face. Her Majesty asked after Granny and her father, and commented on Lucy's likeness to her mother. The interview lasted only a few minutes, but it left Lucy in a "very tremulous state," quite worn out with the excitement. She stayed four days on this first visit, met the royal children, saw all the puppies, and played whist in the evening. She was thoroughly critical of the church services at Windsor, and lamented that the Queen did not realize the comfort of the Liturgy, but ended her comments with the reflection, "We must trust our Queen to Him, and His Loving Wisdom."

A few weeks later came the celebration of the coming of age of the eldest son of Lord Lyttelton, Lucy's brother Charles, the heir to Hagley. Guns were fired off in the morning, there was a procession of the school children with garlands and flags to the back of the house where they all sang. An address to Lord Lyttelton was read, and wine and cake given the children. That evening there was a ball given to the country people, and Charles had to make a speech, which his sister thought was wonderful. At the midnight hour, the Duc d'Aumale proposed the health of the heir, and then Charles got up and stood for minutes while everybody cheered him. "There was a manly modesty," wrote his sister,

"about his manner that went straight to one's heart." Manly modesty was exactly the right note on such an occasion. Next day there was a dinner for the labourers, including all in and out of the parish who worked for tenants, two hundred and fifty in number. The inevitable address was presented and Charles responded. Then Mr. Gladstone rose to propose Lord Lyttelton's health with the grace that was natural to him, and with a touching allusion to the late Lady Lyttelton. These ceremonies were followed by games in the park and by the tea for poor women.

There was another dinner the next day, and the day following the tenants' dinner at a nearby inn. Charles told the tenants that his knowledge of farming consisted chiefly in his being aware that when turnips were good, the partridges lay better in them, and that when fences were well kept, he found the wounded birds the sooner and was less likely to tumble off when riding at them. The cheers, recorded Lucy, were famous. The heir to Hagley acres was boasting to the farmers how little he knew of their occupation. But his zeal for hunting, hunting that was not too helpful to their crops, proved him a sporting man, and that was an essential virtue in the shires. Five days later there was a servants' ball to which came Stourbridge tradesmen and Hagley farmers. The good feeling and heartiness that were expected were handsomely displayed. Everyone cheered loudly for the heir, and sang the "Fine Old English Gentleman." It was the duty and pleasure of that gentleman to be kind to the poor.

Lucy's brother had come of age with all feudal ceremony; now things were in the offing for Lucy. She was invited to Chatsworth for a shooting party. At dinner she fell into argument with the second son of the family, Lord Frederick Cavendish, an argument that left her wishing she had convinced him. Lord Frederick was a Liberal, possibly over-critical of the policy of the Church; Lucy was still ready to fight for her church. Next day her dinner part-

ner was again Lord Frederick; he appeared at Hawarden, her next stop, and the argument was resumed. She returned to Hagley feeling "in something of a dream."

She was again maid-of-honour, this time at Osborne in the Isle of Wight, one of the Queen's favourite homes. It is evident from her account that the routine was becoming a trifle boring. The church services were no more satisfactory here than at Windsor; she was "diddled out of half the service by the Queen's keeping us to go with her for the latter half. And she did not go." It was justly said of Lucy that the church was her public-house. She attended Sunday dinner, observing that the Queen talked to the Dean about sermons and presbyterian preachers, and the Dean made "occasional hits at the Scottish reverends, which the Queen took as a good joke." To judge from other memoirs of the time, jokes about Presbyterian ministers were part of the regular routine between the Queen and her resident clergymen.

In London again she met Dickens and Landseer at Lord Russell's and found neither very pleasant to look at, though she believed that she saw wit and genius in Dickens's odd eyes. Lord Amberley, her dinner partner, was more her kind, but he professed the most unorthodox opinions, such as that all mankind were born innocent. Lucy was running into ideas that had not been current in Worcestershire, ideas that interested her more than she was ready to admit.

The name of Lord Frederick Cavendish appears in the diary more and more frequently, and the friendship that had begun in a religious argument developed rapidly into a romance. It was quite evident to everyone else that Lucy was in love; she herself wrote vaguely about how dreamlike she felt, and how her doubts and fears were melting away, and how she was leaning on the Loving Hand. Out of a great deal of this sort of writing emerged the fact that she and Lord Frederick were actually engaged.

Alliances between the Cavendishes and the Lytteltons were not

settled by the consent of the two involved, however. Lady Louisa, Lord Frederick's sister, had to interview Meriel, Lucy's sister. The whole Cavendish family had to be entertained by the Gladstones. Lucy, her father, and Lord Frederick received communion together; Lucy had had a long talk with her fiancé the day before and decided that his house was built on the Rock. From the service she was taken to Devonshire House, shown into the Duke's chamber, and kissed by that august person. With the ducal peck matters may be said to have been settled.

The two months of the engagement were a whirlwind of excitement and emotional stress. Lucy wrote letters, opened presents, received congratulations. She had a farewell interview with the Queen, who kissed her, scolding a little that she had not known of the secret sooner. The Queen loved nothing better than romance within her circle. Her gift was an amethyst locket bordered with pearls, and on it a little diamond cross. "It is an emblem of what I have to bear day after day," she said. The Queen was always a little sorry for herself.

Fred had to be taken to Hagley to meet the children, visit all the delightful haunts of Lucy's childhood, and interview the old tenants and parishioners. She played him some hymn tunes which she thought "he liked well enough to show me he has music in him." Years later, rereading this bit in her diary, Lucy added in the margin, "A romantic delusion!" On the seventh of June they were married in Westminster Abbey by Lucy's uncle.

Lucy's prayer through her engagement had been: "God make it right for me! God guide me in my decision!" Her prayer was unquestionably answered, both from a romantic and a material point of view. As the wife of Lord Frederick she entered into an estate that could scarcely be improved. The Cavendishes owned five seats, four in England and one in Ireland. Each of them was a museum piece. The Cavendishes themselves were museum pieces. A notable

family since the time of Henry VIII, they had become by the eighteenth century one of the great Whig families, and in the nineteenth were the strong support of the Liberal party. They were famous for dignity and reticence. One story tells how a great-grandfather of Lord Frederick's had been stopping with his brother one night at an inn and had been ushered into a bedroom with three four-poster beds. Around one bed curtains were drawn. Each brother had in turn gone over, drawn aside the curtains, and replaced them without comment. Next day as they were travelling, they discovered that each had seen a corpse in the curtained bed and said nothing to the other.

The Cavendishes of Lucy's time were still chary with words. There was the Duke, now in middle life; Lord Hartington, the eldest son and heir, who though of a slow mind was to make his way by Cavendish honesty and common sense almost to the top of the political ladder; Lord Frederick, who possibly cared more for politics than Hartington, and perhaps had more flair for it; Lord Edward, the youngest brother, who stood for parliament as soon as he was old enough; and Lady Louisa, beloved by all of them.

It cannot have been easy for Lucy to become a member of such a family. It was two years before the Duke ventured to address his daughter-in-law by her first name. Not only was their speech restrained, but their life was formal. They moved around constantly from one house to another, often with as many as twenty servants. Lucy went now to Bolton, now to Chatsworth, now to Holker. The men invariably hunted, whatever the weather; the Duke seemed to think it a test of manhood to go shooting regardless of the elements. Lucy confined her hunting to lunching with the men on the moors. She was never quite happy about the shooting parties, for she had a persistent dread of accidents. She was only happy when she was near her husband. When he had to be

off for a few days, the Cavendishes may have proved a little tedious. But she began to hope that she was winning her new family and suspected that even her formidable father-in-law was growing fond of her.

The Frederick Cavendishes took a town house in Carlton House Terrace, close to the Gladstones. Lucy and her aunt were constantly in and out of each other's house. Mrs. Gladstone was as unmethodical as her husband was orderly, and a woman full of erratic surprises. "What strikes me afresh and anew," wrote Mary Gladstone to Lucy, "is how marvellously, miraculously, you jumped with her, crept with her, flew with her. Whatever her pace, you kept up; whatever she needed, there you were, living, so to speak, in her pocket; always ready to fall in with her, and dovetail, and swap butlers, and supply meals, beds, cooks, or carriages at a moment's notice. Was ever a miraculous aunt so blessed with a miraculous niece?"

She went everywhere with Mrs. Gladstone, from morning visits in East End hospitals and parochial missions to elaborate luncheons in the West End. Now Mrs. Gladstone was going from bed to bed in a cholera ward, now leading a procession of "swells" to visit a convalescent home, now raising money for a pet institution. She took charge of one hundred and fifty little orphans, many recovering from cholera, some without clothes, and established them in an improvised home in Clapton. In such projects Lucy stood shoulder to shoulder with her aunt, but not to the neglect of enterprises of her own, such as her visits to the London Hospital, various workhouses, and old men's homes. She even took a thief in hand, so successfully that he became a Methodist minister in Canada. As she returned from her excursions among the poor to her own big house, she lamented that "there is not even one little baby to take up room."

Whether in the East End, at Chatsworth, or at Windsor, Lucy



had eyes for every child in sight. Every new baby born to one of her friends was a cause of pleasure, and as the years went on, of a sadness that was not jealousy. She noted in her diary: "Dear old Meriel and John came. She looks very well, though, alas! No. 5 hopes to arrive next June. It is a sad trial to the poor old thing, who would stop *very* willingly at 4 and would have been satisfied to have no children at all, which is all but inconceivable to me." When her friend Sybil Ryder was expecting a baby, Lucy wrote: "That wonderful joyful hope has hitherto been withheld from me; this makes a little cloud in my 'great heaven of blue.'"

Meriel's children, "blooming, merry, and rosy," made Lucy more acutely aware of the misery of those babies she saw in her charity explorations, whose lives were "all suffering and cold and starvation." She was painfully conscious of the contrast between their lives and hers, and yet realized that she knew no way to remedy the problem. "It is terrible to know that I only see glimpses of the deep, wide misery all round us and can hardly do any good." Yet it was refreshing to be able to go from the workhouses to the luxury of a dinner at Devonshire House, even though her conscience pricked. "One knows the poor people do not crave for *these* things, and one has been trying to cheer them; still, it feels selfish." She sat at dinner next to John Bright, the Liberal orator, who proved to be uninterested in her discussion of the proposal to establish central pauper infirmaries. No social philosophy that she knew seemed to be wholly satisfactory.

Lucy's interest in politics began to deepen. Born a Tory and brought up in Worcestershire, she began to feel the influence of her Liberal relatives, Mr. Gladstone and the Cavendish family. Lord Frederick took pains to read to his wife political books like those of John Stuart Mill, that she might get at the philosophy of Liberalism. She received a letter from a friend, berating her for becoming Northern in her sympathies in the American Civil War,

and she wrote: "I foresee that I shall get desperately political; but I don't think that must necessarily make me an odious woman!" When the new Liberal government came in, her husband was asked to move the address at the beginning of the sessions of the Commons, an honour always given to one of the younger men. Lucy was critical of his manner of delivery, but consoled herself that the stuff in the speech was excellent. She watched the struggle between her uncle and Disraeli in '67. She was fired by his speeches, by his overwhelming notion of righteous indignation which counted with his niece, but which was to pall at length on a democracy that cannot long remain indignant. Disraeli she despised. In February '68 she wrote: "The Lord High Conjuror has got to the top of the ladder, viz. Dizzy is Prime Minister!! His party take it with a bad grace. I wonder how the Queen likes it." She could not guess that the Conjuror would work his magic on the Queen.

Parliamentary reform was in the air; the mob at Hyde Park showed its approval by breaking down the park rails. The police interfered with the demonstration, which aroused Lady Frederick's ire. It was tyrannical and un-English. What a convert to her husband's Liberalism she had become! But she was still a conservative on matters where the Liberal party had not formulated a programme, such as woman suffrage. "I trust," she wrote, "we are not coming to that."

From 1868 to 1874 Gladstone was in power, and the Cavendishes were in politics, Hartington being in the Government. Lady Frederick went frequently to the Ladies' Gallery of the House of Commons, where from behind a screen she could watch the struggle below. She said of Lord Frederick that he galloped through his speeches as if someone were behind him with a pitchfork. She found the Commons dull; people were beginning to say that it would not work, that it was becoming unworthy of its high function, which sounds like a twentieth-century comment. She was

critical of her distinguished uncle, the Prime Minister, he was so easily drawn into speaking by an Opposition that was playing the merry game of delaying business. She feared that her uncle would never learn the right moment for silent contempt; he never did. He was too much a believer in the sweet uses of reason.

Lord Frederick brought home the news that he had accepted the post of private secretary to the Prime Minister, which caused Lucy to comment on her adopted Cavendishes. None of them seemed to her quick or brilliant—she had been brought up with Lyttltons—but they were accurate, thorough, and able to grasp a subject. About a year later Lord Frederick became a Lord of the Treasury, which meant at that time considerable responsibility for government finances. He was thirty-seven, but he did not dream of accepting office until he had gone to Holker to secure parental consent.

Lucy had an excellent chance to see her famous uncle at close range and to observe the inner circles of government. She went to church with him frequently; he was as great a lover of services as she. He was always being called too old for politics, but he took his niece on a two-mile walk to Burnham church at a killing pace and sallied forth again that afternoon in a drenching rain. That same day there were dispatches from Windsor, including a letter from Disraeli refusing to take office. "As the D. of Argyll and Uncle W. put their noses together on the sofa over the box [from Windsor], the faithful Willy and Fred hovering near, I thought it was a fine thing to assist at a Cabinet Council." Of course she did.

In 1869 Lucy was invited to Windsor for the first time since her marriage. She found it stiff and dull, although the Queen was "as full of gracious charm and simplicity as ever." Of the little grandchild who was to become George V, she observed that he was hardly pretty, but looked a wag.

The Frederick Cavendishes necessarily spent a good deal of time at Chatsworth with the Duke. Here as at other country houses they encountered the Prince and Princess of Wales. The Princess Lucy thoroughly admired, but she felt that the Prince did not get on with her or with any but "chaffy, fast people"; the saddest thing about both of them was that "neither he nor the darling Princess ever care to open a book." The chief entertainment was always shooting, often in a fog. The "dauntless Duke" particularly enjoyed getting a fine number of pheasants; on returning home he would sit in his study and write pheasant letters, presenting some of the birds to friends and the rest to hospitals. That was part of the ritual of the shooting life.

There were intervals when she saw her Hagley family. In 1869 her father married again, a woman of the age of his daughters, with whom the daughters at once became friends. Lucy went to an Eton-Harrow cricket match where three brothers were playing and eight were on the grounds. Family cohesion showed itself not only in cricket, but in music. They had an entire orchestra composed exclusively of Lytteltons and Gladstones. It is recorded of Mary Gladstone that she was once at a party when the diners amused themselves by picking out the ten best people for a dinner. Mary promptly chose eight Lytteltons, Arthur Balfour and herself. A suitable preference for one's relatives was not frowned upon. The Lytteltons were indeed good company, more exciting than the Cavendishes.

The entire clan gathered at Granny's funeral. Granny was a Spencer born, but had been a Lyttelton for two generations. It had been Granny who had brought Lucy presents in childhood, Granny who received the letter from Windsor asking Lucy to be maid-of-honour. It had been Granny who looked at Gainsborough and Reynolds portraits and recognized those she had once known, Granny who could remember Gibbon and the arithmetic lesson.

But Granny was gone to lie with all the Lytteltons underneath the chancel of Hagley church.

Lady Frederick herself was now out in mid-stream. She was still interested in good-looking and well-dressed people, and still unhappy when she realized that she was not smartly enough dressed for an occasion. But youth and beauty were not what they once were to her. After a dull dinner-party she set down sadly in her diary: "Unmitigated boys and girls don't do!" She began to feel middle-aged and bored, but more than that, she began to feel independent enough to go her own way. She had declared herself in favour of Saturday closing and would not shop on that day. She was pleased that working men were learning to combine, a pleasure not generally shared by her friends. That the Commons did not come out more on the question of poverty distressed her. The Franco-Prussian War made her feel Quakerish on the question of war, although her pacifism was fairly dilute. In religious matters she leaned toward the increasing ceremonial and high church tendencies of the day, but was still in favour of comprehension, of allowing those of widely different conceptions of the Articles of the Church to worship under the same banner. She was conservative enough to dislike the new income taxes imposed by her uncle's Government because they put the burden of taxation on the middle and upper classes.

She learned the joys of independence in taste. At art exhibitions she found herself looking at Leighton's paintings with disapproval, "ancients playing at bowls with nothing on." Burne-Jones failed to interest her; the pre-Raphaelites she deemed self-conscious and sensuous.

Across her pages move men and events that belong in the long succession of the Victorian years. She met Tennyson at No. 10 Downing Street. He was a favourite of the Gladstones, but Lucy described him as a "dirty man with opium-glazed eyes and rat-

taily hair hanging down his back." Dickens was a different story. His death gave her more pause than any other literary event she recorded. To her he was the unsurpassed and unsurpassable novelist. It weighed with her, too, that his pages were free from what she called impurity. The appearance of Sarah Bernhardt from the Comédie Française aroused the puritan in her. "Not content with being run after on the stage, this woman is asked to respectable people's houses to act and even to luncheon and dinner; and all the world goes. It is an outrageous scandal." She was equally shocked over people's broadmindedness on religious matters; her friend Rosalind Howard discussed immortality as though it were actually an open question!

Toward the material innovations of the day Lucy was far more receptive. She larked off with Frederick to the South Kensington Museum on foot, that they might have the thrill of coming back in the Underground. She found it "charming and wonderful." The telephone was another novelty, but since Frederick shouted into it all one evening without success, Lucy decided it was a failure, just a "wretched new craze."

From 1874 to 1880 the Liberals were out of power, the Conjuror was performing at his best, and Lady Frederick's politically-minded relatives were not always on good terms with one another. Gladstone had resigned the leadership of the party, and Hartington might well have assumed it. But Gladstone, with his fierce moral indignation about Turkish atrocities, had to occupy again the centre of the stage, a place he might surrender in letter but not in spirit. Lucy continued to hate Disraeli; when he came back from Berlin bringing peace with honour, she took the cheering crowds very hard. "Friends and foes alike will have it he is to be made a Duke; by all means say I, if they will make him Duke of Jericho, and send him to administer his duchy." The general intensity of feeling was not lessened by the fact that her friends and associates,

all part of the upper ten thousand, hated Gladstone even more than she Disraeli.

In 1880 everything shifted again. Parliament dissolved in March; all the hopes were of a Liberal victory. Her uncle was returned by a great majority; Lord Frederick was making a triumphal tour of his constituency in Yorkshire. Lady Frederick looked down from election platforms on Yorkshiremen, "such keen, strong, intelligent faces listening intently and seizing upon the points of the speeches." It was well for her to learn about middle-class voters in the north; it was they who furnished Liberals for Westminster. She found them most hospitable: "We fly into the arms of rabid dissenters and teetotallers, all as gentle as sucking doves." Her husband was returned by a majority beyond all expectation; relatives on every side were being elected. The Queen sent for Hartington, but was eventually compelled to ask Gladstone to be Prime Minister again. Lady Frederick could not but say that it would have been splendid if Gladstone had retired at the top of his wave of triumph, but few old men are wise enough to do that. Meanwhile Lord Frederick was asked to be Financial Secretary, and Hartington Secretary for India. The Government was in some degree a collection of Lucy's relatives.

When she started her last diary in October, 1880, she wrote: "There is something awful in closing my last book, which lasted six years and contained the most terrible experience of my life, and opening this new one with the trembling thought of 'what may and must be coming.' *O Lord, thou knowest.*" By the most terrible experience she probably meant the suicide of her father, who had taken his life in a fit of melancholia. A more fearful experience was ahead, of which she seems to have had a premonition.

The resignation of Forster as Chief Secretary for Ireland meant a successor who would have to bear the brunt of all the hatred

that was expressing itself in that country. The position had carried with it odium and failure, and was obviously not one to be desired. Lord Frederick knew that he was being considered for the post, but believed that he did not have the right qualifications. One evening he brought home to his wife the news that he was in for it. It did not please his friends. "Are you going to your martyrdom?" inquired Lord Rosebery. The Duke was opposed to his son's acceptance of the office, which caused Frederick to waver, but Lucy told her husband that he had to consider first his duty as a public man. Had not duty always been a Lyttelton watchword? But even she was shaken in her mind when she realized that coercion had been determined upon in Ireland, for she knew her husband would hate to carry that policy out.

Meanwhile she could not fail to notice that the newspapers were not impressed with the appointment. No doubt it looked to some of them as if Lord Frederick had received an important cabinet post because he was the husband of Gladstone's niece. Furthermore, he had never been a finished speaker. It is to be remembered that he had never made up to the newspapers. Joseph Chamberlain, on the other hand, appeared in the papers constantly; he represented the new methods in politics that were just beginning to be used. Lord Frederick was a Cavendish of the old tradition and would have scorned to stoop to the press.

Lord Frederick set off to Ireland on a two-day trip to look over the situation. Lucy saw him depart on Friday, went to a lunch Saturday, and then to the Abbey for prayer. Members of the family dropped in on Lucy during the evening, for they knew she was eager to talk of the Ireland decision. At midnight Lou came in. "As soon as I saw her face, the terror seized me, and I knew something must have happened to my darling." A telegram had stated that Lord Frederick was dangerously wounded, but only a little later word came of his death. When Lucy learned the





EAGLE HALL, ABOUT 1828



truth, she sank to the floor, moaning quietly, "Don't let them hate them, don't let them be angry with them; Freddy wouldn't like it." When Mr. Gladstone arrived, his presence seemed to comfort her; he succeeded in convincing her that the tragedy was not in vain. With the stoicism and heroism of the old English stock from which she came, she was able to whisper to Uncle William, "You must never blame yourself for sending him."

So ended Lady Frederick's political life and at the same time her diary. She was forty-one years old; she was to live for forty-three more years. At the time she wrote: "There may be as many years again to live as I have already spent (for I can't imagine what is ever to weaken my leathery health), but I have entered on the solemn last stage for all that. The social delights, the absorbing political life, and all the fun of the shooting seasons, lawn tennis, riding, is gone by and shut off from me and I am stranded on an awful quiet shore."

Not quite stranded. She still had no end of causes to interest her, the Yorkshire Ladies' Council for Education, the Girls' Public Day School Trust, the Parochial Mission Women, the Armenians, and temperance. She was not afraid to make public speeches, nor to ask support for her many causes, nor to beg cheques from her friends and relatives. In other memoirs of the time, Lady Frederick crosses the pages now and then, a remote figure like the scholar gipsy on the Berkshire downs. She was still part of the Gladstone circle. She looked after Alfred until he married Laura Tennant; she was his comforter when tragedy came to him in the death of his wife in childbirth. She was near when death at long last came to Hawarden. She was with Alfred when in 1913, after he had been a cabinet minister, he died from a wound caused by a cricket ball, died the darling of his class and generation. She lived through the years of the War, in which many of her dearest nephews were involved. The photograph of her taken in her later years shows a

kindly, keen, eager lady who bore a resemblance to Mrs. Gladstone. What she thought about the new world after the War would be interesting to know. Did she revert to the conservatism of her youth, or was her open mind awake to the new policies and possibilities? She lived through the first Labour Government, but not much longer. When a physician had at length bad news to tell her, she took it all casually; even her last illness was faced without fear. The last questions she asked were about those she loved. She had long outlived that Victorian age she graced.

## Coke of Holkham

THOMAS COKE, known as Coke of Holkham or Coke of Norfolk, belongs to the generations of English as a type of the great country gentleman in the eighteenth century. He is an indispensable figure in that indispensable century. He lived at a bountiful rate, as gentlemen were expected to do, and he never turned the poor from his door. He served God and feared no man, as the words carved on wainscots enjoined. He ventured even into the presence of Royalty in his hunting clothes.

Because it was duty he went into politics, but with apparent reluctance, and, unlike most of his kind, was a Whig; once in that game he took it with the same seriousness as hunting or farming. For whatsoever his hand found to do, he did with his might, and his opinions were no less vigorous than his actions. Those opposed to his party were a gang of placemen who were defrauding the honest folk of England. Words of careful qualification were not in his Norfolk speech. It was all very simple, as it has often been with hard-riding squires. He had the truest John Bull mind, remarked a contemporary, of anyone he knew.

Yet with all his zeal he was an engaging man, and, though not given to demonstrativeness, was naturally friendly to many kinds of people and craved their friendship. To stick to his friends was part of his creed. He could forgive and make up, except with Tories. Like the best of the Whigs he had pity for human affairs.

Descended from Sir Edward Coke, the judge who refused to modify his decisions for James I and who later led the House of Commons in their struggle with that self-important sovereign, he

had much of his ancestor's obstinacy and courage, but little of his distinguishing, edged mind. He managed nevertheless by his persistent encouragement of the new agriculture to win himself a place in the story of England that will be hardly less important than that of Sir Edward.

Young Coke went to Eton, but his interest from childhood had been less in books than in hunting and shooting. When he was at home in the Norman manor house of Longford in Derbyshire, he would slip out of bed before daylight, make his way to the dairy house for a dish of cream, then to the bakehouse where he would wait until the loaves were newly drawn. Finally he would shoulder a gun, whatever the weather, and start for the hills.

While his father was still undecided which of the universities should receive his son, the question was determined for him. A note arrived from the boy's great-aunt, Lady Leicester, the old lady whose estate would eventually come to him. She declared that if the boy would give up "those schools of vice, the universities," and travel instead, she would grant him £500 a year. For the young man of seventeen, the choice between a grand tour and the further pursuit of learning was easily made.

Before starting on his travels he went to visit the great-aunt. When he entered the gates of Holkham he had to drive two miles through bleak Norfolk country, its barrenness inadequately covered by young trees. At the top of the hill was an eighty-foot obelisk which marked the centre of the estate. Below him he could see the grassland and the broad sea-marshes, and ahead the magnificent Italian house which his great-uncle had imagined and realized, and which he would inherit.

His great-aunt shook her slight fist in his face and assured him that she intended to live as long as she could. He found it hard to please her; either he lost his way in the many passages and was late to breakfast or he danced with a young woman who had

looks rather than money or family to commend her. The formality of life at Holkham, the interminable dinners and the mass of servants overcame his active spirit.

He was glad to be off on his travels. He went first to Turin, where he stayed several months, studying at the university. The presence in Italy of a handsome young Englishman, heir to a great fortune, was not long unnoticed and he was welcomed at royal courts and thrust into cotillions. From Rome he went to Florence, Vienna and Paris, where he arrived just after the coronation of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette. In Paris he would have been glad to linger, but his sister Elizabeth was in July to be married to his friend, James Dutton, and there was nothing for it but to go home. He had been away nearly three years.

It was not long after he landed in England that he fell in love with James Dutton's sister, Jane. She was twenty, with clear, delicate features, an exquisitely turned head and neck, and corn-coloured hair. Mr. Wenman Coke had other ideas for his son's alliance; there was in the neighbourhood a clever and sensible, if slightly deformed, daughter of a baronet, who was said to be heiress to £40,000 a year. Young Coke's unwillingness to yield to his father about his marriage led him to take refuge most of the winter of 1775 in Beadwell Hall in Oxfordshire, which he had taken with his brother-in-law. Here he started a pack of hounds of his own and gained a reputation as a horseman and shot.

Then many things happened at once. That great-aunt, Lady Leicester, who had been so intent on living long, died and Mr. Wenman Coke became the owner of Holkham. Young Coke celebrated his twenty-first birthday, and in some way gained the point of his marriage to Miss Dutton. That lady's favour to Coke had been observed even by the Queen, who had seen more than she should, a little holding of hands. Only a few months after the marriage of Coke his father died, and Thomas was obliged to

turn from the breeding of hounds to the business of managing an estate.

At the same time he was urged by his friends to offer himself as a member for Norfolk in parliament. So pleasing were his ways, so wide his acres, that he was nominated without opposition. The crowd gathered from over the county for the chairing. As ladies watched from the windows, Coke entered the borough of Norwich, dressed in full court regalia, bag-wig, knuckles and sword. Before him rode the cavalcade of gentlemen, clergy and freeholders, who proceeded to the shirehouse for the speeches. There was a great deal said of course about the critical position of public affairs and the interests of the people. In due time Coke's name was brought up, and the electors being unanimous in their approval, he replied with what was put down afterwards as an elegant speech.

Almost at once the chair appeared in the streets below, a large thronelike affair with red silk upholstery, crowned by a carved emblem of Plenty. To support the arms there were fat wooden cupids bearing clusters of gilded grapes. The chair rested on a platform which in turn rested on two long poles. When Coke mounted the platform the poles were hoisted to four and twenty Norfolk shoulders and the procession set out. Every sixty paces there was a halt while the chair-bearers tossed the chair and its occupant as high as they were able. It was a perilous matter to become a member from Norfolk.

Though only twenty-two Coke entered political life with a complete set of working prejudices. When he was a boy, his grandfather had taken him upon his knee and said: "Now remember, Tom, as long as you live, never trust a Tory." Tom did remember, and years later, when his friends were wooing him to enter politics, they suggested that if he did not take his place from Norfolk, a Tory would be elected. "At the mention of a Tory coming



in, gentlemen, my blood chilled all over me . . . and I came forward."

To be a Whig in the last quarter of the eighteenth century involved certain attitudes and loyalties. One must look back upon the Revolution of 1688 as the glorious event that saved the liberties of the nation; one must regard with suspicion George III and all his friends who were making use of unconstitutional methods; one must obstruct in every way the plans of Lord North and later those of William Pitt; one must drink toasts to George Washington, who was maintaining in the new world the principles of no taxation without representation; one must put up with the Prince of Wales, who was lending his name to the Opposition; and one must offer eternal loyalty to the sacred cause of Liberty, and friendship for life to Charles James Fox.

Such tests Coke met easily. He liked afterwards to recall that every evening during the American Revolution he had drunk to the success of George Washington. Loyalty to Fox had been bred in him. When he was still at Eton he had been affected by the tradition of Fox's charm and good nature, a tradition that lingered around the little streets under Windsor Castle. Not long afterwards, when Coke had entered the House of Commons he met Fox at a dinner at Lord Rockingham's and could not keep his eyes off the face of the great man, that face that seemed to glow with more than earthly animation. "I attached myself to Fox," he would say afterwards, "and I clung to him through life. . . . He was a friend of the people, the practicer of every kindness and generosity, the advocate of civil and religious liberty."

Shoulder to shoulder with Fox, Coke fought for the India bill which was to establish a board of seven commissioners over the Government of India and so reduce the powers of the East India Company. He made continuous warfare on administrative extravagance and on new forms of taxation. When in 1784 the Tories

were swept into power, turning out one hundred and sixty-eight Whigs, and Coke himself only escaped defeat by withdrawing from the contest, it was enough glory for him to be called one of Fox's martyrs. It was this election that parson Woodforde attended, of course as a supporter of the opponents of Coke.

Coke professed himself glad to leave the intricate and petty strife of political factions. He had resented the duty of spending so large a part of the year in London away from the fields. London air was bad and country life, particularly in Norfolk, was wholesome. There was a song sung by his Norfolk tenants that expressed their views of him:

"Squire Coke went to Lunnon to kick up a fuss.  
He'd best stay at home and grow tur-r-nips with ous."

That song reflected the interest Coke was later to take in farming. As a young landlord he was more devoted to shooting and hunting. His hunting trips covered Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Essex, and even the country close to London. He is said to have caught a fox where Bedford and Russell Squares now stand. In another contemporary song Coke is described:

"Attentive and civil till Reynard is found,  
Then hears nor sees ought but the head leading hound."

It was the charge of his enemies that his horses and hounds were his chief delight, a charge that did him no harm in the county.

Such a man he might always have remained. He did indeed hunt all his days, but he was too full of opinions and too fond of imposing them upon others to be satisfied with the hunting life, even when diluted with county politics and Westminster. He became interested in farming, rather accidentally, as he came to believe afterwards. Soon after his coming to Holkham two of his leases fell in, and when he offered to renew them at five shillings an acre the tenants told him that the land was not worth eighteen

pence an acre. No doubt they meant it, for northwest Norfolk around Holkham was much of it a stretch of bleak, unproductive land, some of it marshland that had been redeemed from the North Sea. Little wheat was grown, and few cattle raised. The sheep were an old Norfolk breed with narrow backs, the worst sheep in England, according to Robert Bakewell. The vegetation, according to Lady Townshend, consisted of "one blade of grass, and two rabbits fighting for that." When one adds to these discouraging features the capacity of Norfolk farmers to resist change, the refusal of tenants to renew leases at five shillings an acre does not seem so unreasonable. To their astonishment young Coke decided to farm the land himself.

He proceeded to visit farmers in other counties, talked with them and invited them to visit him and to give him their advice. He went to Dishley in Leicestershire to see the renowned Robert Bakewell, once referred to by the Countess of Oxford as "the man who invented sheep." Bakewell came to Holkham and taught his host, among other things, to judge cattle by the laying on of hands, for he took Coke's hand in his and guided it over the animal to show him how to determine its conformation and its inclination for feeding and fattening.

On more than thirty thousand acres of Holkham there were at this time no cattle and only eight hundred sheep of the old Norfolk strain. Coke began buying sheep, but not before he experimented with various breeds. The new Leicestershire sheep he found superior to the Norfolks, but the Southdowns he decided were better than either. It was not long before he had a flock of twenty-five hundred Southdowns. Indeed it was hinted that he had filled the country with Whiggish sheep and spoiled the flavour of Norfolk mutton.

It was not easy to fill the county with Whiggish sheep, or Southdowns. Coke had his own ways, however, of convincing

farmers. One morning he rode over to a neighbouring farmer and asked him to go to Kipton Ash Fair. At that fair he pointed out a fine flock and suggested that his neighbour buy a hundred of them. The farmer persisted in his refusal until Coke offered to make good any loss he might sustain. A year from that date the farmer rode to Holkham to ask his landlord to go with him in turn to the fair. There he bought four hundred of the sheep at his own risk. Norfolk soon had many flourishing Southdown flocks.

Coke was not less interested in improved cattle. He was starting off one morning to hunt when he saw thirty Devon cattle being driven into Holkham, a present from his neighbour, the Duke of Bedford, who wished Coke to give them a trial. There was nothing that interested Coke more. He fattened two Devons and a shorthorn—the breed of cattle preferred in Norfolk—and found that the two Devons cost no more to feed than one shorthorn and weighed thirty pounds more apiece.

But experiments were one thing and persuading farmers of their significance was another. Coke suggested to a tenant that shorthorns were great consumers, but the man steadily refused to give them up. Some time later Coke was riding by to ask if the tenants were still satisfied. "Mr. Coke, you were right! Them darned beasts have eat up all my turnips! and gi' them a chance, they'd eat all the turnips in the parish." Mr. Coke's tenants had an ingratiating way of becoming convinced.

The history of the change from shorthorns to Devons was typical. Coke learned what he could from farming dukes with bees in their bonnets, from ingenious tenants, from travellers and from writers about farming, and then set out to test on his own grounds what he had picked up. His place was a kind of Agricultural Experiment Station. Having arrived at conclusions he put all his weight into persuading others of their truth. Other men,

like the Duke of Bedford over at Woburn Abbey and the Earl of Egremont down in Sussex, were doing the same thing.

Coke had notions about pastures and wheat and barley and the alternation of crops. By reviving old methods such as the use of marl, and by developing new ones such as "inoculating" the land with sod, he made grass grow where heath had been. He used the rich deposits of marine substances at the base of old lakes that had been estuaries of the sea, and fertilized the ground for raising wheat. Norfolk which had always imported most of its wheat became in the nineteenth century a land of many wheatfields. Coke grew barley as well, "hat barley" as it was called by his tenants, because it was so thick that a hat thrown on it would rest on the surface.

He encouraged the cultivation of mangel wurzels and turnips as feed for cattle. Two generations earlier turnips had been so successfully introduced into Norfolk by Charles, second Viscount Townshend, that he was known as Turnip Townshend. Coke had turnips planted in rows, using the drill perfected by Jethro Tull. A popular song went

"Some counties vaunt themselves in pies  
And some in meat excel,  
For turnips of enormous size  
Fair Norfolk bears the bell."

Such improvements would have been of little avail had Coke not realized that the farmers had to make a profit as well as the landlords. For generations farmers had been reluctant to go to the expense of improvement lest their rents be at once increased. The proverb, "Botch and sit, improve and flit," had experience behind it. Coke renewed leases on long terms so that the tenants would profit. He did more, he built fine farmhouses for his tenants, gentlemen's houses for farmers they were called.

He was always thinking of an independent and proud yeomanry. One wonders what the farmers thought. William Cobbett, who did not like him and always dubbed him "Daddy Coke," testified that the farmers had the feelings towards Coke of affectionate children towards the best of parents. Yet farmers are seldom affectionate children; they are likely to be conservative and suspicious of change or of the least interference.

But change and improvement were part of Coke's Whiggism. Providence had made him, he believed, a temporary steward of an ample fortune to be used for the advantage of others.

It was also part of his Whiggism that one man at least in theory was as good as another, especially if he were a farmer. He no doubt relished the song:

"Coke little recks of low or high  
Coats fine or jackets barely worn;  
The landlord of Holkham ne'er looks down  
On the humble grower of barleycorn."

But this pleasant belief had its limits. Those proud yeomen "were willing to be led but would never be driven." He was to be a leader. He could not escape the natural assumption of men of his ilk, great landholders, that the places in parliament and in government were for them and their circle. Given that fundamental principle, there was no loss of dignity upon his part in fraternizing with his tenants and in insisting upon their equality. Was he not the great Coke of Norfolk, the first Commoner of the kingdom as William IV was to call him?

At any rate farmers from everywhere found themselves welcomed at Holkham. Two of them from Kent and Sussex came expecting to meet there Arthur Young, the vivid writer on fields and farms. They were told that Young had not yet arrived, but that Mr. Coke was out riding with the ladies and that they were

to go meet him. From their arrival until dinner time, and from dinner through the late afternoon till evening, Coke devoted himself to them, showing them all the ewes and bulls, taking them to examine the saltmarsh on which his yearling heifers were feeding. It was July, and they saw valets, footmen, grooms, cooks, and women labourers getting the hay into cocks, and could not resist joining in the game. Next morning early Coke was showing them the stables—they had already visited the slaughter house—and the brick manufactory. It was audit day, however, and Coke turned the two men over to Mrs. Coke who rode with them for thirty miles, pointing out the improvements and delighting them with her detailed knowledge and her directness.

But Holkham was not given over wholly to farming. It was a Whig centre, and when there came in November, 1788, the anniversary of the landing of William of Orange, what was more natural than that there should be a great celebration at Holkham? Most of the county was invited, including parson Woodforde and his niece. An ingenious Italian worked for weeks arranging the fire-works and superintending the decoration of the house. On the great day, as soon as it was dark, the carriages began turning in at the gate. When the guests reached the obelisk at the top of the hill, they could see the colonnades and the great portico glowing with wreaths of coloured fire-works. Everywhere were the buff and blue of the Whig party. Blazing above the pediment was the coat of arms of the Prince of Wales, the friend of Fox and the princely ally of the Whig party. When the guests arrived at the house, they saw men in blue coats and women in white satin with bows of orange twisted in their powdered hair. The white satin whirled and broke in waves over the floor; the blue coats bowed their way towards the door of the salon; there the host and hostess were waiting to receive them under an illuminated banner inscribed, Liberty and our Cause.

At nine o'clock Coke's little daughter, Jane, who was eleven, opened the ball with a minuet, and presently there was dancing throughout the great house, cotillions, country dances, minuets and whatever the guest suggested. In a little side room older folk played cards and listened to a string quartette. Sharply at ten the guests gathered at the windows to watch the fire-works. On the lawn thousands of people had assembled with thousands more out in the park. Everywhere they could find refreshments; beyond the fire-works was a great bonfire surrounded by forty barrels of beer.

At the stroke of two in the morning, supper was served for the guests indoors. After supper there were toasts to Fox, to Coke, and to the Cause of Liberty. The health of George III was not drunk. The Prince of Wales had not been able to come down from Carlton House, and only a few of the guests knew that the King was seriously ill with that madness that was to come and go the rest of his life.

Holkham was a place not only for spectacular entertainment but for all sorts of guests, visiting scholars who used the manuscripts, tourists, scientists, agriculturists and sportsmen. Sheridan was often there. Fox made it a second home. The Duke of Gloucester and Prince Leopold came down quietly from London like old friends, but the Duke of Sussex arrived in state, in a coach and four, with armed footmen, masses of luggage and the most outlandish servants in Europe. The Duke was once scheduled to appear in the middle of a Sunday afternoon, but after the midday dinner, Coke set out for the little church by the lake, remarking, "If the Duke chooses to time his arrival for an hour when he knows I always goes to church, he cannot complain of my not being at home to receive him."

It was Coke's pride that he went out of his way for no one; indeed he did go out of his way on occasion to be rude to the



great. It was not so much inverted snobbishness as righteous indignation that caused him to withdraw his usual welcome to the Prince of Wales. That royal being had secretly married Mrs. Fitzherbert, a Roman Catholic, although he knew that by English law a prince married to a Catholic could no longer succeed to the throne. He had no idea of giving up the throne, and he did wish a grant of £180,000 to pay his debts. When Fox, known to be an old friend of the Prince, rose in the Commons and declared that the Prince was not married, he believed that he was speaking by authority, and when he subsequently learned that he had been deceived, he was indignant, and his friends such as Coke felt that the Prince had committed the unpardonable sin. Hence when the Prince wrote to propose his annual visit to Holkham, he is said to have received from Coke a brief note: "Holkham is open to *strangers* on Tuesdays."

It must have been a disappointment to Coke that his beloved wife bore him only daughters, three of them. Their education was a matter about which their mother had definite theories. She watched over them herself, leaving little to governesses. The girls were to be made strong by discipline; they were given simple food and not allowed to have a fire in their bedrooms or a hearth-rug in their schoolroom.

When she was fifteen the second daughter, Anne, was looking out of the window to watch the descent from his carriage of young Mr. Anson, no doubt aware that he was the heir of Shugborough, and convinced that he had come to ask for the hand of her elder sister. But she was summoned downstairs by her father and told that it was she—she was nearly fifteen—whom Mr. Anson wished to marry. About a year later, when she was almost sixteen, she pinned up her hair and became Mrs. Anson. Her husband had her chaperoned at parties and encouraged her to play cards with

the older ladies, but by twenty she was the mother of four children and surely a matron.

The older sister, Jane, had already taken her place in the great world. Lord Andover wished to marry her, but although he was personable and able, he had no considerable fortune. Coke, who was generally believed to have an income of perhaps £30,000 a year, was curiously reluctant to have his daughter marry into a family without means. The great Lady Suffolk is said to have borne down on him. "Does the blood of all the Howards count for nothing?" she asked. "Madam," replied Coke, "I count my blood as good as the blood of all the Howards." No doubt he felt that his money was better, but he may have been feeling poor, as the rich so often do. It is possible that Coke with all his rents had overspent himself on improved farming and on elections and was considerably in debt. But he yielded to the marriage, and there was a second wedding at Holkham. The third daughter, Eliza, was born after Anne's marriage and before Jane's, and her training was just as Spartan as that of her sisters.

Both Jane and Anne and their husbands spent part of each year at Holkham with their father, generally during the hunting season, which began in November and lasted for three months. Sometimes there would be as many as eighty guests in the house, some of whom stayed for weeks together.

On one of these shooting parties, in January, 1800, there was tragedy. When at breakfast one morning the crowd realized that a heavy fog had crept up from the sea, they were disappointed, but had no mind to give up their sport. Not so Lord Andover. His wife had dreamed the night before that he had been killed by an exploding gun and the family believed that she had the gift of foreseeing events. As the morning wore on and the fog lifted Lady Andover's fears seemed a little foolish and she urged her husband to join the shooting. After he had started off her



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anxiety returned and she could not forbear setting out in the direction he had gone. Suddenly one of Lord Andover's servants galloped up, crying, "I have killed my Lord, the kindest and best master that ever lived." As Lord Andover had been handing the gun to the servant it had gone off and penetrated his intestines. Such accidents were not uncommon in the annals of sporting Britain.

Lord Andover's death was followed by that of Mrs. Coke, and Coke was left alone at Holkham with his five-year-old daughter, Eliza. Not only family tragedies but the situation in England was bringing cloudier days to the master of Holkham. Less than a year after the great fête at Holkham in honour of England's bloodless revolution, men and women were dancing around the Liberty Tree in Norwich to celebrate the fall of the Bastille. Riots made the propertied classes uneasy and societies for parliamentary reform sounded to conservative gentle folk like the end of their natural rule. The King issued proclamations against seditious activities and assemblies. France was assumed to be the enemy of the old order, and when she invaded the Austrian Netherlands and declared war against Britain, the Tories in England were not sorry to be arrayed against her. War was soon followed by a mounting national debt, by high taxation, by a shortage of bread, and by distress among the poor.

All this went against the grain of Coke. He was concerned over the widespread hunger, he hated the policy of repression of opinion. He was utterly out of sympathy with the war. But the reaction against liberal opinion made his cause a losing one. Fox's star was on the wane. Catholic Emancipation and the abolition of slavery in the colonies, two other causes in which Coke was interested, were destined to be put off for a long while. He now spent most of his time at Holkham, farming, shooting and plant-

ing woods, coming up to Westminster only occasionally when Fox summoned him.

Fox's death in 1806 strengthened his inclination to forsake politics and devote himself to his land. But in October parliament was dissolved and the Whig freeholders of Norfolk overruled his reluctance to stand for parliament. The election was a stormy one. William Windham, who had once gone back on the Whig party but was now again within the fold, stood jointly with the owner of Holkham. Windham has been called by Lord Rosebery "the finest gentleman of his or perhaps of all time," and it was a period when fine gentlemen were savoured. But his unpopularity with Whigs as a one-time turncoat was so great that he imperilled Coke's chances. Moreover Coke had lost much support three years before by scoffing at the imminence of invasion by Napoleon and at the activity of the volunteer militia.

There was as much horseplay as usual in such elections. "Does Mr. Coke take the Freeholders for a pack of hounds that are to be whipped up to the sound of Hark Wind-him when he chooses to give them the View-hullo?" asked one writer. "If he does, he will find they are the true faithful English Bulldogs, and not of the Fox-hound breed." The poll was to last six days. Whole families prepared to drive into Norwich. Posters were on every hoarding. Windham was advertised as "Wonder of Wonders. Just arrived in Norfolk and now exhibiting under the patronage of the perpetual Dictator [Coke]." One pamphlet treated the poll as a horse-race, the horses being Dictator, Weathercock (Windham) and Perseverance (Wodehouse, the Tory candidate). "The Dictator was a beast of some merit . . . always . . . up to the fleetest hounds, particularly in the chase of the Fox." If unsuccessful he was to "pass the remainder of his life attached to the plough and harrows at Holkham."

Coke and Windham were elected, but the opposition contested

the result on the ground of treating. As a matter of fact all three candidates had displayed generosity towards voters. In talking to a friend Coke estimated that £70,000 had been spent upon the election. The Commons were strongly Tory and threw out Coke and Windham. Then a curious shift took place. Coke's brother, Edward, resigned his seat for Derby and stood for Norfolk, while Coke was elected for Derby. It was the old game of Going to Jerusalem.

Coke was back in the Commons but his unpopularity at home weighed on his spirit. The easy good will that accrues to a great landlord who is generous and oncoming had always been his, but it is not a kind of good will that can endure hard times. The suffering in the county among the labourers who received miserable wages was intense; many of them were living on barley cakes and potatoes. Coke was sympathetic enough with their position, but through a mistake in the wording of a petition he was believed in Norwich to be supporting the farmers against other elements in the population. In consequence he and Lord Albemarle were nearly mobbed in the cattle market at Norwich by an angry crowd. Some of them cried: "Let us seize the villain, and before night we will have his heart on a gridiron," curiously melodramatic words to use about the kindly Coke. But the stones which accompanied the words were more realistic, and the two men seemed to be in danger until Kett, the butcher, with presence of mind let a large bull out of a pen, having first twisted its tail. The bull charged the mob, so the story goes, with Coke quietly following in its wake. Indeed one report had it that Coke steered himself through the mob by holding on to the animal's tail.

In July, 1821, there was the usual great sheep-shearing or "clipping" at Holkham. For the farmers of Holkham and their families it was the occasion when they met on almost equal terms with the great, and when their accomplishments were given recog-

dition. For Europeans and even Americans interested in agriculture, it was a conclave of importance.

In the morning Coke saw his park filling with people. The tenantry were all there. Carriages were arriving from a distance. There came the Duke of Sussex, of the royal family; there came Robert Owen, whose schemes for model villages have given him a place in history; there came Richard Rush, the American Ambassador. Lord Tavistock was there representing his farmer father, the Duke of Bedford, and Francis and Joseph Burdett important in the history of nineteenth-century social reform. It was nearing ten o'clock, and Coke came out to meet his guests.

As Coke appeared the crowd rushed towards him. He mounted his horse and waited for the procession to form, hundreds of men on horseback. The Duke of Sussex drove in an open barouche with some of the older men. Older! Coke himself was sixty-seven! He had been up since five preparing for the activities of the day. He looked around with pleasure on the throng, signalling Robert Owen and the American Ambassador, both on horseback, to join him, and then setting off at a brisk trot.

They went over the estate that day, examined the inoculated pasture, the prize cattle and boars, and inspected the new implements that had appeared during the year. They rode out to the farthest parts of the estate. A lunch was waiting at one of the farmhouses, and when that was over the crowd returned to Holkham for dinner at three. At that feast a farmer succeeded in breaking through the oratory to say: "Maister Coke and gentlemen, what Ah wish to say is—if more landlords would dōe as Maister Coke he dōe, there'd be less dōe as they dōe dōe!" The dinner was followed by the sheep-shearing.

Next day the guests went round the village and were shown over the school and the improved cottages that Coke had been building. On the third day the carcasses of slaughtered animals



were viewed, and then came the great dinner at which more than five hundred guests sat down. Two hundred of them were placed in the Statue Gallery. Here was Coke's table with a magnificent silver urn that had been presented him by his tenants. At the end of the dinner he rose and gave the familiar toast, Live and let Live. Prizes were awarded to the best shepherd, the best ploughman, to farmers far and near for successful exhibits, and to men who had made valuable suggestions for the improvement of land.

It was to be the last clipping. The year brought a startling change in the routine of Holkham. Among the young people who had made Holkham their second home was Lady Anne Keppel, the daughter of Lord Albemarle. To Coke the child was almost as dear as his own Eliza; she was his god-daughter, she had lived much in his home, and he hoped that one day she would marry his nephew and heir, William Coke, and become the mistress of Holkham; indeed he used his influence in that direction but without effect upon either of the young people involved. It was Coke himself, sixty-eight years old, whom the eighteen-year-old girl wished to marry. She was a spirited and impulsive creature with a will of her own, and she evidently had an ally. Her affection for Coke she had confided to her grandmother, who wrote in reply:

"I have received your kind and affectionate letter today, and have to tell you that Mr. Coke set an hour with me yesterday and talked all the time of his favourite Anne, and desired me to tell you that if ever you were in any difficulty to apply to him, for that he loves you as if you were his own child; do not show this letter to anybody but burn it directly."

The letter was not burned and is part of the evidence as to this strange affair. It was not long before Lady Anne found herself in difficulty and could take up his offer. Her father was married again and that ceremony may well have made her feel lonely, and perhaps uneasy about her stepmother. From an upstairs win-

dow she was watching the carriages drive away and saw Coke's coach driven up to take him back to Holkham. "I saw the coach," she afterwards told Eliza, "and I thought if Mr. Coke once gets into that, all is over—and I rushed downstairs." Her impetuosity prevailed, and two weeks later she and Coke were married. There was no clipping the next year because of Lady Anne's condition, and the clippings were never renewed.

The marriage was a three months' scandal of society. But one by one Coke's friends had to admit that he had found felicity. Only Lady Spencer, his lifelong friend, maintained a silence for three years, and then wrote him a letter of reconciliation that he cherished years later on his deathbed. No better mistress of Holkham could have been than Lady Anne. In all Coke's prejudices she out-Coked him. She hated Tories even more than he did. She produced six little Whigs, four of them boys, and when one of them asked her whether Tories were born wicked or merely grew up that way, she replied severely, "They are born wicked and grow up worse." Indeed because of her advanced views she was considered radical. She even induced her husband to snip off his queue because it was so outmoded as to look Tory. She was also a farmer; she dug and weeded in her garden so much that her husband felt constrained to build a mound to shelter her from the gaze of those passing through Holkham.

Coke was still, despite his age, an impressive figure. His eyes were as clear as ever, his back as straight as that of a military figure, and he still grew angry at the mention of a Tory. The Duke of Sussex once wrote to a friend: "We shall keep up the old Whig principles, which between ourselves no one really possesses but Coke himself in the family." The old Whig spirit was dying, but it was alive while Coke survived. With the passage of the Reform Bill in 1832 he retired from politics. With that measure and Catholic Emancipation adopted he was no longer needed.

When he was eighty-three and had become Earl of Leicester—he had refused a title more than once—he continued to rise at daybreak and drive over his fields to watch the beginnings of the day's labour. During the season he went shooting with the sons of Lady Anne, Thomas, Edward, Henry and Wenman, all of them younger than the grandchildren of his first marriage.

His old friends were slowly departing, Lord Spencer, Lord William Russell, and Lord Holland. In 1841 he attended for the last time the supper given to the tenants of Holkham after the annual audit. He had tired himself out in the course of a long day and the ever watchful Lady Anne tried to persuade him to omit the supper. But he declared that he was an old man whose life could not be of long duration, and that he wished to see his farmers again.

The farmers had not expected him, and when he entered the dining room leaning on the arms of his sons, the company rose, stamped on the floor and sang again and again the "Fine Old English Gentleman."

Did they sing the last stanza? We are not told. That ran:

"But time though old is strong in flight  
And years rolled swiftly by,  
And autumn's falling leaves proclaimed  
This good old man must die."

The good old man was dead in less than a year. He had lived eighty-eight years from two years before the Seven Years' War into the beginning of the Victorian age, almost to the repeal of the Corn Laws. But to the eighteenth century he belonged. He was the gentleman of the old school.

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## Thomas Bewick

THOMAS BEWICK has his place in the chronicles of the eighteenth century as the man who gave wood-engraving in England a new start. He is also worth our attention as one of those ingenious youths who pushed forward easily to the top of his craft. But it is his country background and his poetic feeling for the country that make him most memorable. Wordsworth once expressed a kind of envy of him; and in a different form of art, he was on a smaller scale another such as Wordsworth, drawing fresh insight from the woods and hills and streams that he knew. It is pleasant to remember too that he came from the border, from the lands of the Percy and the Douglas. Northumbrian he was above all, and so as English as could be, as English as Frederick Bettesworth of Surrey, or Coke of Norfolk.

He was born in 1753 at Cherryburn, near Eltringham on the south side of the river Tyne across the ferry from Ovingham, about eight miles up river from Newcastle. His father, John Bewick, rented a farm with a coal pit, from which he sold coal at the pithead, an active man who had never known ill-health, a passionate man who trusted his fists rather than the law when it came to thieves or ill-doing, but a man equally compassionate. He was respected over a wide country for his integrity and listened to for his lore and tales of Tyneside.

John Bewick married as his second wife Jane Wilson, the daughter of a Cumberland farmer. Before her marriage she had been housekeeper to Mr. Gregson, the curate and school-teacher at Ovingham, and had been as useful to him in his teaching his

scholars Latin as in looking after his house. To her husband she brought seven children of whom Thomas was the eldest.

At an early age Thomas was sent to Mickley school, where he made little progress in learning his letters, but was often beaten by the ignorant and rough schoolmaster. One day Thomas was put upon the back of another boy "who kept hold of my hands over his shoulders while the posteriors were laid bare" for the master to whip him the more effectively. Thomas rebelled, bit the boy, broke the shins of the master with his iron-hooped clogs, and ran away from the school. Under another master he began to make progress in reading.

Meanwhile, if we may trust his recollections, he was already filling the school porch with chalk representations of familiar objects, filling as well the blank spaces in his books and on the grave-stones in the churchyard. This was the more extraordinary because at that time he tells us that he knew of no pictures save those to be seen on the signs of the Black Bull, the Salmon, the White Horse, and the Hounds and Hare. It may be guessed, however, that he had not failed to observe the chapbooks and ballad sheets on cottage walls with their crude woodcuts of Robin Hood and Maid Marian and of border heroes. His master used to watch him and dub him a conjuror. His father was no more pleased than the master, finding fault with him for such idle pursuits. There were those, however, to provide Thomas with paper, pen and ink, and presently indeed with a camel's hair brush and a shell of colours, and then the hunters, the horses and the dogs were set down so faithfully that the neighbours recognized them and bought his little paintings, though "at a very cheap rate."

His mind was already being filled with impressions. From the windows at the head of his bed he could look out on the changes of the woods and the heath, on the coming and going of birds. At an early age he came to know the robins, the wrens, the black-

birds, the sparrows, the crows, and those rarer visitants the woodcock, the snipe, the redwing, and the fieldfares.

By many excursions he was becoming acquainted with the roads through the woods. He was often away fishing, wading streams, and coming back late in the evening, when he heard his father's whistle. He joined parties that hunted hares or traced founcats (polecats) in the snow or followed the badger at night. With other boys he would engage in pranks which it pleased him to call afterwards the overflowing of an active wild disposition. Quite naked he would set forth with other lads in the manner of story-book Indians on a trip over the fells; he would climb tall trees to grab the nests of rooks; on one occasion he tamed a vicious horse. When he and another youngster once saw two oxen grazing near a sharp bank above the river, the boys from the bushes overhead suddenly sprang at them and drove them over the bank into the river, pleased at the "delightful dash" with which they plunged in. For this lark as for others he was punished, but he had a way of disappearing until his father's anger was cooled.

Like many others, Thomas was inclined to believe that his own early days were an example of what education should be. Gentlemen's sons were too soon put to school, he thought, and wished they might be sent to the edge of some moor to scamper among whins and heather, under the care of some good old man who would teach them a little every day. By such methods they would gain not only health but the flow of spirits that made for an energetic mind and a great soul.

On winter evenings he would listen to the tales and songs of the border wars. "These songs and 'laments' were commemorative of many worthies; but the most particular ones that I now remember were those respecting the Earl of Derwentwater, who was beheaded in the year 1715." That Earl, who had taken part in the Jacobite rebellion, was the hero of many narratives. Thomas had

been told stories of the light from heaven that accompanied the body of the Earl to the vault at Dilston Hall, he had heard that prosperity would shine no more upon Tyneside, and the prediction had made an impression upon him.

By those on every side Thomas was told tales of the supernatural. Once at night he was pursued by what seemed to be the devil, but turned out to be a neighbour youth on his way to a "kirn supper" who was going "a guising." Fortunately for Thomas his father was an unbeliever in tales of spectres and devils, and further taught his son to have no fear of the dark.

Between times he had jobs to do about the farm. His first employment was to muck the byre, that is, to clean out the cowshed. It was not much later that he was allowed to try his hand at milking the cows. Often he would rise early in the morning and with a dyking mitten and a sharpened broken sickle would go to the moor and cut the sprouts of the whin bushes. These he would lay in a corner, and then in the evening he would "cree" them into the consistency of soft wet grass, which he would feed to the horses. At other times he would be occupied with a small flock of sheep on the fell, a few of which were his own. It is possible that as he grew older he spent some time working with his father's pitmen in the mine. Thus in various ways he was thrown constantly in touch with farm labourers and came to know what was in their minds.

He had other experiences that were to stay in memory. He tells us of his first deep impression of young women. It will be remembered that Christopher Gregson was both curate and schoolmaster, and that in his house Thomas's mother had been housekeeper. Mr. Gregson's daughter, Betty, kept a dog whom the boys would tease. Miss Gregson called Thomas to account. "I can never forget her looks upon the occasion. She no doubt intended to scold me, but the natural sweetness of her disposition soon showed itself



in its true colours . . . after some embarrassing attempts . . . she put me in mind of my being related to her, and of her uniform kindness to me, and with irresistible arguments and persuasions made me see the impropriety of my conduct." Such a mark this episode left upon Thomas that from that time on he would never again plague any of the girls at school. He believed that the impression was never effaced from his mind, and more, that it had fostered in him a fixed respect and tender regard for the whole sex.

Betty Gregson's father also tried an appeal to his generous nature. Thomas's days at home and at school had been a life of warfare and punishment. Mr. Gregson endured a long while the struggle against authority and at length invited Thomas to dine with him, and, after great kindness, remonstrated with him on the impropriety of his conduct, urging him in such a persuasive way to desist from it, that from then on Thomas never gave his master occasion to find fault.

As he grew older he found pleasure in his acquaintance with the people in the country round. Beyond Cherryburn lay the common which extended some miles in length and was of various breadths. It was mostly fine green sward or pasturage, broken or divided indeed with clumps of blossoming whins, foxgloves, ferns, and some junipers, and with a great deal of heather. "Near the burns which guttered its sides were to be seen the remains of old oaks, hollowed out by time, with alders, willows, and birch . . . and these seemed to me to point out the length of time that these domains had belonged to no one." On that common were a few sheep, an occasional cow, perhaps a flock of geese, and stocks of beehives. Now and then a walker would meet with a cottage or a hovel, built by some poor labourer, to which he had added a garth (a small fenced-in piece of land) and a garden. These labourers were, wrote Thomas, of an honest and independent char-

acter, and held the gentry in respect. Most of them living away from their fellows were odd characters with whom Thomas was glad to talk. From one of them, a man with stern-looking brows, high cheek-bones, quick eyes, and longish visage, Thomas learned what he knew of astronomy. "I think I see him yet, sitting on a mound or seat by the hedge of his garden, regardless of the cold, and intent upon viewing the heavenly bodies."

Another neighbour of the fellside was Anthony Liddell. "When full dressed, he wore a rusty, black coat. In other respects he was like no other person. In what King's reign his hat had been made was only to be guessed at, but the flipes [flaps] of it were very large. His wig was of the large, curled kind such as was worn about the period of the revolution. His waistcoat or doublet was made of the skin of some animal. His buckskin breeches were black and glossy with long wear." His character was formed on the Bible, and he treated acts of parliament as of no consequence. The fowls of the air and the fish of the sea, he maintained, were free to all men, and hence he paid no heed to game or fish laws. In consequence he had now and then to be put in gaol, and nothing was more to his taste. In the gaol he had not a single hand's turn to do; there was leisure to read the Bible and the narratives of old battles.

Another labourer equally singular took a fancy to young Thomas and imparted his secrets to the lad. The man kept sheep on the fell, but had business with bees. A few beehives he kept in his garden to divert the attention of possible thieves, but most of the hives were concealed under the boundary hedge of the common or under the branches of old thorn trees, overhung by brambles, woodbine, and briars. In this way and by good management he became well-to-do.

There was often good stuff in the poor, as Thomas looked at it, but the farmers of the neighbourhood did not seem as interesting. Their minds were so taken up with the managing of their lands

that they had little time for reading or reflection. But the class above them, the lairds or gentry, seemed to him to have the naturally ideal position as men who farmed their own lands. Many of them, he admitted, were ignorant and offensively proud, faults not lightly condoned in Thomas's part of the country. With regret he observed that they were being driven by poverty into towns and had to give up their "ha houses." Gentlemen, he believed, ought never to forget the station they held in society. It was they who were the natural guardians of public morals and might with propriety be considered as the head and heart of the country. But he did not overlook the "bold peasantry, their country's pride"—he was fond of that quotation—they were in truth the arms, sinews and strength of the land.

When Thomas was fourteen, William Beilby and his brother Ralph, engravers in Newcastle, came to Bywell, a village up dale from Ovingham to call on the widow of the vicar there. She happened to be Thomas's godmother, and gave them such an account of the talents of her godson that the men went on to Cherryburn to see Thomas. In consequence Thomas was soon bound apprentice to Ralph Beilby.

Leaving his home was no easier for this boy than for most. "I liked my master; I liked the business; but to part from the country, and to leave all its beauties behind me, with which I had been all my life charmed in an extreme degree—and in a way I cannot describe—I can only say my heart was like to break; and, as we passed away, I inwardly bade farewell to the whinny wilds, to Mickley bank, to the Stob-cross hill, to the water banks, the woods and to particular trees, and even to the large hollow old elm, which had lain perhaps for centuries past on the haugh near the ford we were about to pass."

His father accompanied him to Newcastle and took the occasion to offer him advice, "showing how much he detested mean-

ness and . . . drawing forth every particle of pride within me, for the purpose of directing it in the right way." For the first time his father urged upon him the principles of religion which his mother had taught him, but it was the pride which his father stressed upon which Thomas relied, and which, he believed afterwards, did much to keep him from stepping off the path he had marked out for himself.

The firm of Beilby to whom he was bound apprentice did many kinds of work, engraving, seal-cutting, painting upon glass, etc. Thomas found himself with a miscellany of tasks, work for silversmiths, for watchmakers and clockmakers, for undertakers and bookbinders and even for hardware men. "Every job, coarse or fine, either in cutting or engraving, I did as well as I could, cheerfully," so cheerfully indeed that his hands became as hard as those of a blacksmith.

Fortunately there was wood engraving to do as well. Although Thomas had never had a lesson in drawing, he was put to blocking out wood for engravings and was so quickly successful at it that his master, who liked other work better, turned over much of it to him, or at least allowed him to block out the engravings. With certain blocks that Thomas cut Mr. Beilby was so pleased that he sent examples of them to the Society for the Encouragement of the Arts in London, and in 1775, after he had left the firm, Thomas was given a second prize of seven guineas, which he immediately turned over to his mother.

Thomas had been finding associates in Newcastle. If the group at his boarding-house seemed to him nothing less than wicked, he was fortunate in others, and especially in an older man, Gilbert Gray, a bookbinder. "This singular and worthy man was perhaps the most invaluable acquaintance and friend I ever met with." Thomas listened eagerly to his moral advice and lectures. Gray's detestation of vice and his praise of industry, frugality and tem-



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perance fitted in with the precepts Thomas had gathered from his parents. It was Gray's object in life to "promote honourable feelings in the minds of youth and to prepare them for becoming good members of society." He had been educated for a priest, but he would say: "Of a trouth, Thomas, I did not like their ways." But he never ceased to be an agent for doing good. By utmost frugality he saved money and bought books which he could loan to Thomas and other young men.

His son, William Gray, was no less kind to Thomas. It was in his larger collection of books that Thomas read what he called the best authors, but unhappily gives us little light as to what they were. He does inform us that he had already read Smollett's *History of England*; he was pleased with some of the characters and shocked with others, taken aback that evil characters could be spoken of with complacency. The good and the evil remained simple attributes in his mind. He read through a "chaos" of religious books, but apparently they confused him, and left him in a more unsettled state about religion than when he began them.

In 1774 Thomas completed his apprenticeship and, rejoicing in his freedom, hurried back to Cherryburn. So thoroughly had he established himself as a wood-engraver that he received, while away from Newcastle, special commissions for work. But more of his time, it must be said, was given to fishing and shooting with old friends or to going round the country with his father on his tours to collect the money due to him for coal. It was not only the Tyneside landscape that he was glad to view again, but the faces of the country people that seemed to him to beam with cheerfulness. It was still a time when many men had work to do that they liked. "This was heightened everywhere by the music of old tunes, from the wellknown, exhilarating wild notes of the Northumberland pipes, amidst the buzz occasioned by 'foulpleughs' (morris or sword dances) from various parts of the country."

Thomas took it into his head to go on a long walk. Sewing three guineas in his breeches waistband, he set out for Scotland, stepping, however, westward first, and stopping at Haydon Bridge, near Hexham, to call on his old teacher, Thomas Spence, the philanthropist. From Haltwhistle he went forward to Naworth Castle, and from there over the moors, where he had to scramble past peat-bogs and peat holes, to his uncle's house at Ainstable in Cumberland. Staying a week in that region of high sharp fells, he headed northwards to Langholme, and so to Hawick and Selkirk. "I had been, in this short tramp, particularly charmed with the Border scenery; the roads in places twined about the bottoms of the hills, which were beautifully green, like velvet, spotted over with white sheep, which grazed on their sides, watched by the peaceful shepherd and his dog." That pastoral land had been the scene of Border wars, and Thomas wavered between his dislike of war, and his love of "traditionary tales" and the tunes of old times.

In Edinburgh he fell in with an old Newcastle acquaintance and went to stay in her house. It was natural for him to hunt up an engraver, who at once put by his tools and guided him over the city, giving him a history of many things. From Edinburgh Thomas walked to Glasgow, from there to Dumbarton, and thence he started on a zigzag trip across the Highlands. The beauty and serenity of the Scottish lakes and the grandeur and terrific aspect of the mountains did not escape this poet in wood. He had made up his mind to stop at no town and put up at no inn. He found himself usually accompanied or directed to some farmer's or grazier's house by the drovers whom he fell in with; in some of those farmhouses, he would stay overnight, and his hosts would ask questions about the land from which he came. They would often prevail with him to stay more than a day and direct him to some other distant grazier. When he would leave he found that his hosts would refuse money, and when he attempted to offer coins



to the children, he would be pursued and obliged to accept a pocketful of bannocks or scones.

In one house where he stayed the family played upon the pipes and Thomas in his turn played Tyneside tunes. Next day he put money in the hands of the children. "I had not got far from the house till I was pursued by a beautiful young woman, who accosted me in 'baddish' English . . . the purport of which was to urge my acceptance of the usual present. This I wished to refuse; but, with a face and neck blushed with scarlet, she pressed it upon me with such sweetness—while I thought at the same time that she invited me to return—that (I could not help it) I seized her, and smacked her lips. She then sprang from me, with her bare legs, like a deer, and left me fixed to the spot. . . . I had not seen her while I was in the house, and felt grieved because I could not hope ever to see her more."

Owing to the hospitality of the Highland folk, Thomas had spent little money, but he feared nevertheless that in the towns he might run out of silver and set his steps homeward. Arriving in Stirling he halted to recover from the sunburn in his face. Pushing on to Falkirk he viewed the Carron iron works and saw one of the sights of the day, a vessel afloat in a canal above his head. From Edinburgh he took ship to Shields at the mouth of the Tyne and arrived in Newcastle with a few pence left.

In Newcastle he paused only long enough to earn a little money and embarked on a collier for London, arriving there in about three weeks. He soon found old friends, the Gregson boys and that William Gray who had loaned him books, and who was now a bookbinder. Like every country person, he went over the town, gazing upon buildings and statuary. He called upon Thomas Hodgson, a publisher of ballads with woodcuts, who hailed from Newcastle, and was delighted to find that Hodgson had arranged work for him and had waited eagerly for his arrival.

He ran into cockney young men, who were secretive about their engraving methods and called him a Scotsman; they were not like the young men he knew in the North, but an ignorant lot. The streetwalkers of London he could not but notice; he had to talk to them and learn their sad stories. In each of them he saw a good mother lost. Women were better than men in any case; he had considered the matter and had settled it in his mind that there were at least four good women to one man.

Meanwhile he was doing so well in London at engraving and spending so little money—it was his habit to spend less than he made—that he found himself independent in a great city, almost thriving. But he was eager to be off; he did not like London; there were too many extremes: “Extreme riches, extreme poverty, extreme grandeur and extreme wretchedness.” He tired of it and determined to return home. It was a world to which the village boy, used to the friendliness of a small community, could not accustom himself. The promises of success held out to him moved him no whit. He was not of that ilk whose favourite view of the North was of the road that led towards London. His words would have been those of the Jacobite exile, thinking upon Northumberland.

“There’s nought wi’ me I wadna gie  
To look thereon again.”

His friends were reluctant to see him go, but Thomas Hodgson, as another good Northumberland man, promised to send him enough work for two years. Bewick boarded a collier and on about the twenty-second of June, 1777, came in sight of St. Nicholas steeple in Newcastle.

It had been his scheme when he arrived in Newcastle to set up for himself. But his late master, Mr. Beilby, invited him to become his partner, and that invitation Thomas, not without look-

ing two ways, accepted, taking on his brother, John, as his apprentice.

His time was now somewhat his own. Even as an apprentice, he had often walked in the evening the twelve miles from Newcastle to Cherryburn to visit his parents, trudging back the next morning. Now he was able to go to Cherryburn every week-end winter and summer. "I often stopped with delight by the sides of woods to admire the dangling woodbine and roses, and the grasses powdered or spangled with pearly drops of dew; and also, week after week, the continued succession of plants and wild flowers. . . . On setting out upon my weekly pedestrian 'flights' up the Tyne, I never looked out to see whether it was a good day or a bad one. . . . I always waded through the first pool I met with, and had sometimes the river to wade at the far end."

But he never changed his clothes after such wading. It was his pride that he had inured himself to hardship, his creed that exercise and difficulty were necessary for the body. But there was more to it than that. "To be placed in the midst of a wood in the night, in whirlwinds of snow, while the tempest howled above my head, was sublimity itself, and drew forth aspirations to Omnipotence such as had not warmed my imagination so highly before; but, indeed, without being supported by ecstasies of this kind, the spirits beset, as they were, would have flagged, and I should have sunk down." Like Wordsworth he had to draw upon the world of nature for his ecstasy. That ecstasy was everything, and, if he had missed it, he would indeed have sunk down.

The year 1785 saw the loss by Thomas of his mother, his sister, and his father. His mother had rushed out on a cold night to see a young woman who was ill, and, crossing a frozen bog, had slumped through the ice and received a "perishment" of cold, from which she died within a few weeks.

His eldest sister had come down from London at the time of

her mother's illness, and died soon after, at the age of thirty. Before her death she asked Thomas to see that she was buried in Ovingham churchyard, and then proposed to sing a song to her brother. Thomas was surprised, but before he could stop her, she proceeded to sing: "All things have but a time."

From the time of Mrs. Bewick's death, Thomas's father never held up his head. He was shot through the breast to the shoulder with a great pain that hindered him from breathing freely, his son tried to persuade him to use medical assistance, but without avail. "He wandered about all summer alone . . . and took no pleasure in anything, till near the fifteenth of November, which, I understand, was his birthday, and on which he completed his seventieth year, and on that day he died."

While his mother and father were alive, Thomas had not been interested in marriage. When the situation changed, he began at once considering a wife. His mother had suggested to him a certain young woman, but while Thomas recognized that she was handsome and had a good fortune, he regarded her as mentally one of the weakest of her sex and did not proceed further. The smirking lasses of Tyneside, he admits, had put him down as a woman-hater, and it pleased him to think how little they knew of him. He was now ready to give the subject of marriage his attention. He wished a wife who was healthy and sensible, but he was inclined to trust to love as a natural guide in such matters. Mercenary considerations were not to interfere. The wife he picked upon, Isabel Elliot, had grown up in his neighbourhood; he had seen her in prosperity and adversity, and in the latter state she appeared to him to such advantage that he resolved to marry her. During all his days he remained devoted to her.

Meanwhile he had been doing more wood-engraving. In 1777, the Newcastle printing firm of T. Saint produced a volume of woodcuts called *A New Year's Gift for Little Masters and Misses*,

some of which were by Bewick. Two years later they offered the public *Fables* by Mr. Gay, which contained woodcuts made by Thomas at least five years before, some of them based upon woodcuts by earlier engravers but now improved in design, some of them Bewick's own work. At about the same time Saint published *The Pretty Book of Pictures for Little Masters and Misses, or Tommy Trip's History of Beasts and Birds*. This children's book had nearly sixty woodcuts by Bewick, many of them of delicate composition and revealing much of his close observation. His pictures were natural; they had departed from the old conventions of wood-engraving. He was doing in his art almost exactly what Wordsworth was doing in poetry. Of course some of that closeness to nature was made possible by new tools he had devised for cutting and by new methods he had hit upon for dealing with wood.

In 1784 there appeared *Select Fables* in which Bewick continued to show improvement. There was now better grouping of figures and better arrangements of black and white. With this set of pictures his reputation was made.

At about this time Marmaduke Tunstall of Chillingham Castle, Wicliff, asked him to engrave one or more of his wild Caledonian bulls at Wicliff. Arriving at Wicliff Bewick had no little trouble in getting near the bulls who were neither approachable nor interested in being sketched for posterity. "I was therefore obliged to endeavour to see one which had been conquered by his rival, and driven to seek shelter alone, in the quarry holes or in the woods; and in order to get a good look at one of this description, I was under the necessity of creeping on my hands and knees to leeward, and out of his sight; and thus I got my sketch or memorandum, from which I made my drawing on the wood." The engraving of this bull remains one of the most famous of Bewick's works.

He was now busy planning with his partner, Beilby, a *General History of Quadrupeds*. Beilby was to prepare the reading matter, and Bewick to do the cuts. Thomas's friend, Solomon Hodgson of the *Newcastle Chronicle*, urged the partners not to make the history a schoolbook but a more respectable work of a high character. That idea was accepted, and a prospectus was sent out to the public. The publishers averred that the books on the subject in existence were either voluminous works to be found only in the libraries of the wealthy or small cheap productions of a type to turn away those who observed for themselves. This was to be a work of authority, but a book nevertheless that would sell for eight shillings and that might interest many kinds of people. It was planned that when the curious had been served with the best impressions, "a second and inferior edition will be done for the use of youths at school, with a view more widely to diffuse a better knowledge of this branch of natural history, and also to awaken in the contemplative mind an admiration of the wonderful works of Nature."

Such a project took years to carry through. Bewick made sketches from the animals exhibited in travelling circuses; he went on journeys to see animals. He was intent upon catching their exact shapes and attitudes. More than those who had gone before he made his animals alive and in movement. His failures were with those animals he had never seen.

The work was given to the public in 1790, and included two hundred engravings and over a hundred vignettes. Within a year it went through a second edition, and during Bewick's lifetime through eight editions.

Thomas's next project was a *History of British Land Birds*. To prepare this he went to see the great collection of stuffed birds at Wicliff; he spent months in viewing birds in their native habitats, and in making sketches of them. Not infrequently he found that his sketches of the stuffed birds and the birds he had seen alive

did not agree in detail, and he would gain the help of his friends to shoot birds or to bring them in alive. The work was published in 1801, and along with the following volume on British sea birds, fixed Bewick's place as the wood-engraver of his time. As in earlier volumes, he had inserted many tail-pieces, which the public examined with even greater relish than the proper illustrative matter.

Those tail-pieces are likely indeed to be the woodcuts of Bewick longest remembered. He was fond of showing men crossing fords on horseback; he liked layers of stone in horizontal position with thick clumps of bushes above them. The massed bushes with intricate leaf tracery furnish backgrounds for the living figures, but like Bewick's trees, seem to be at a remove from the Nature he wished to copy. But he had an eye for trees, for hollow, broken trunks, for rough bark, for branches bent over into odd shapes, for young trees leaning over streams. He was skilful at other details, at showing the shapes of fields and their borders, or midwinter landscapes, or the activities of the barnyard. He could crowd much into the background of a vignette, a stream with a village across it and hills behind, or a cottage with the roof fallen in, or a Norman tower between trees, or the steeple of his favoured St. Nicholas Church at Newcastle.

His vignettes are often merely country scenes. One represented a man reaping with a vista in the background. In another two horses were standing in a downpour of rain and their postures expressed their opinion of the weather. One of the best of such vignettes is a group of geese marching home, almost like Prussian soldiers. Another famous one was a group of strolling players approaching a village, with a gallows in the background.

It was hard for him not to tell a story in his pictures. He was the original of the makers of "funnies," or "comic strips," but his stories were not always amusing. Rather he was inclined to show his figure in difficulties. The child who had been forgotten by the

nurse and was starting to pull the tail of a restive horse is one of his vignettes often remembered. The nurse is running towards the child, and the reader is left in suspense. In another tail-piece a blind man is shown standing in an empty street patiently fiddling away, while his dog looks on with perhaps a trace of superiority. No less characteristic is a picture of a beggar sitting outside the gates of a country house eating the meat from a bone while his dog waits his turn hopefully, or that of the old man saying grace with head bowed and eyes closed, while his cat is consuming the porridge.

Bewick had an eighteenth-century penchant for contemplation in the churchyard. His vignette entitled *The Cavalry Charge* pictures four boys each astride an upright tombstone as if riding to attack. In the same vein is a cut of Wetherall churchyard on a promontory overlooking the sea, with a few gravestones in sight, and one in the foreground broken off but still retaining the words: "This stone was erected to perpetuate the memory of," the rest of the stone having fallen into the sea. It is Bewick's version of "An Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard."

His subjects and scenery were drawn from his home country. His Ovingham friends believed themselves able to recognize many of the faces in his tail-pieces, including that of the engraver. The fields, the cottage walls with roofs gone, the hollowed oaks were familiar to his neighbours.

His country character he retained, even when he had become a national figure. In his autobiography he has refreshingly little to say about the important men who came to see him and whom he knew; rather the narrative is full of memories of the friends of his youth and early middle life, and naturally of the engravers he had known. When he went to country houses to use their collections of birds and animals, he was likely to stop with men of his own kind in the vicinity. When towards the end of his life he hap-



pened to be in London, his friends wished to give him a public dinner, but he would have none of it.

His whole life and his outlook upon the world were as simple as his tastes. Good was good and bad was bad. He never called himself a Whig, but that is what he was. He would have been able to agree on many things with Coke of Holkham and Charles James Fox. His heroes were Benjamin Franklin and "the incomparable Washington." He distrusted William Pitt as much as Coke did, and believed that Britain was sinking under the weight of corruption. Country gentlemen were the natural leaders of the country, but for some reason virtue had gone out of them.

Yet he had some of his own special opinions. He was chary of extending the vote save to intelligent householders, and he believed in the importance of general education. He was a good way ahead of his time when he proposed that farmers who rented their land should be given compensation for the improvements they had made. But it was out of his own country experience that he wished to see easier game laws and freedom of fishing in rivers. His programme lacked practicality in his time, but not a whole-some idealism.

His fame continued to grow, not because he did better work, for his later engravings had lost some of their savour. With angels and saints, with pilgrims crossing the Jordan into the next world, he was not on familiar ground; he was not enough of a mystic. But if his work fell off, the interest in his woodcuts waxed, and collectors were busy before his death. He had no mind to help them, or "to feed the whimsies of bibliomanists."

He died in 1828, eight days after the finishing of his *Memoirs*. But some time before he had cut the tail-piece that was used as the last illustration in that book, a coffin being carried to the foot of the hill below Cherryburn for the ferry to Ovingham.



## Parson Woodforde and Nancy

TO a visitor stopping in an English village to sample the country round and taste its particular flavour, the vicar is likely to be a godsend. That he speaks with an accent reminiscent of the University, and likes to discuss old novels and poems, is agreeable, but what is important is that he understands better than anyone else the people in the village and thereabouts. Not infrequently he is something of a philosopher who, wanting intellectual companionship, has been forced in upon his own thoughts; in many cases he is a man who has watched his own hopes of a place in the world comparable to that of some of his University friends dwindle and has sought satisfaction in a quiet, useful life. Yet he is seldom embittered; he is likely to be a kindly man who looks out upon the world with humorous eyes.

Many other kinds of clergymen are to be met with: the worldly man who has his eye on a better living, or who prides himself on his acquaintance with the county families; the gossiping parson long since content with the small beer of his neighbourhood; the intently spiritual man who would lead his parishioners towards heights they are reluctant to attempt. Yet an observer cannot escape the impression that the average clergyman is one of the best of the English types, that he is likely to be a man of judgment and taste, and to possess the old middle-class integrities.

Not in every generation could as much be said for the clergyman. The parsons that crowd the pages of Trollope, those Victorian busy-bodies of Bassetshire, were neither very useful nor very estimable. We may discount Trollope's representations of a

class with whom he had little sympathy, and yet recognize that the Church of England was not at its best during the first half of the nineteenth century. It was probably not any better in the last half of the eighteenth century when many of its divines lived for the comforts and good things of this world.

Yet that could not have been the whole story even in the eighteenth century. In that same time there was the clergyman pictured in Goldsmith's "Deserted Village":

"Unpractised he to fawn, or seek for power,  
By doctrines fashion'd to the varying hour;  
Far other aims, his heart had learned to prize,  
More skilled to raise the wretched than to rise.

To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,  
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven."

Goldsmith bestowed upon his clergyman most of the virtues which George Herbert a hundred years earlier had expected of the parson. It was not merely an ideal long cherished. There were such clergymen up and down the country.

James Woodforde who flourished in the last decades of the eighteenth century was neither from Barsetshire nor from the Deserted Village. But he was probably an average specimen of the well-to-do parsons of his time. His serious thoughts perhaps did not rest in heaven, but he was rooted in the clerical life. His father, his grandfather, and his great-grandfather had been country parsons. Brought up in the clergyman's small world he settled himself easily into it, he knew its obligations and privileges, he had a nice sense of his relations to his neighbours of every class.

He did not stop to inquire too closely about those neighbours. Rather he took them as he found them; he was satisfied if they conformed to certain patterns he recognized and was disposed to

accept them at the valuations given them by the community. Their failings did not distress him unless those failings caused him inconvenience. Their virtues he took for granted.

He took himself in much the same way. Though he was fairly selfish, and more so as he grew older, he was not self-analytical, nor indeed greatly concerned about his own character. His weaknesses he vaguely recognized and did nothing about them, for he was of his time and not a reformer. In his generation he would have been called a good man, in the old meaning of that word, and so he was. He was careful to break none of the rules of his class and to live up to its duties; he was an essentially kindly soul, and he had sympathy not only for those whom he knew to be in distress, but for those he had never seen. What was more significant to his associates he had a good deal of high spirits and of the joy of living, which made him good company.

Yet he would not have been good company for those who ask much of their companions. He had neither wide reading, nor breadth of interest, nor acquaintance with new ideas. There was no fresh, inquiring intelligence there. He was a serious, conventional man with little sense of proportion. He was not an interesting man, save as every man, if we know enough about him, is interesting.

We do know enough about Mr. Woodforde. The reader who dips into any one of the five volumes of his diary finds the entries dull; there is too much about food, too much about the petty routine of a household. But for some reason the reader keeps turning more pages, and when he has read perhaps two volumes, a volume more than he intended, he becomes absorbed in the details, as if they were out of his own life. The piling up of repetitious detail has at length involved him.

The parson began putting down those details when he was a student at New College, Oxford. From there he went in 1763 to serve

in turn various churches in Somerset as curate, all of them near his old home.

At Oxford he had been on friendly terms with two sisters; in the Somerset days that followed he had been interested in a Betsy White and had committed himself so far as to discuss marriage with her, when opportunity offered. But he was not one, even in his youth, to rush into decisions, and Betsy had not waited for him.

In December, 1774, he was elected by the fellows of his college to an excellent living at Weston Longville in Norfolk, about nine miles to the northwest of Norwich. In May, 1776, he set forth on his mare from Somerset to Norfolk to assume charge, taking with him his nephew, Bill Woodforde and a servant, Will Coleman. At Weston he put the vicarage in order and engaged two maids, one an upper servant with good looks and an understanding of cookery and of needlework, and another to do the milking and more menial tasks.

His arrival was gradually recognized. A neighbour clergyman brought over two packets of asparagus. Mr. Du Quesne, who was easily the ecclesiastical figure among the clergy of the vicinity, an agreeable old bachelor who moves circumspectly through more than three volumes of the diary, sent a servant with a present of strawberries. The squire, Mr. Custance, made no move at first, but the squire's brother and that brother's mistress became acquainted with him while they were all engaged in fishing. Mr. Woodforde was taken into a club called the Rotation, the members of which were clergy in the district, one of those genteel dining clubs that were already common in the country.

Mr. Du Quesne, who lived less than three miles away, took Mr. Woodforde with him to a meeting of the nobility, gentry and clergy at the Maid's Head in Norwich, where money was to be subscribed towards a regiment for the King "in these critical



JAMES WOODFORDE





times." It was 1778, and the war with the American colonies was not going too well.

But more important than even Mr. Du Quesne was Mr. Custance who may have heard a good report from Mr. Du Quesne, and who finally came over one morning and talked very civilly to the new member of the community. "My Squire," as the parson was henceforth to call him, had been leisurely in extending his welcome, but he was soon to make up for it. It was not long before Mr. Woodforde was spending an agreeable day, the first of many, at Weston House, the squire's home, and playing backgammon with Mrs. Custance.

The squire's younger brother, Press Custance, had already shown himself friendly and the parson had reciprocated by allowing the mistress of that gentleman, Miss Sherman, whom he looked upon as one of the "genteel strangers" in the community, to occupy on Sunday the parsonage pew in the chancel. To this arrangement there was objection from Weston House, and the parson sent word to Miss Sherman that he could no longer allow her the use of his pew, a message which she took in good part.

However careful the parson had to be, and however long he had to wait for his betters and equals to show friendliness, he could make the first moves with the villagers. At harvest time he had the harvesters in to dinner and followed the local custom of bestowing a shilling apiece upon them, giving them also as much refreshment as they could drink. His "tithe frolic" was a greater occasion when he invited the farmers to his house to pay what they owed him in tithes. Some of them he put in the parlour and others in the kitchen, no doubt according to the size of their holdings. The tithes they paid him amounted to £236. 2s., a considerable sum. The tithe was indeed a burden to farmers, and so it must have been in Weston, but it was also a handicap to the parson because he had to exact money from the very people to whom he minis-

tered in a religious capacity. It was well that the parson made the occasion a festive one; the farmers consumed quantities of wine, rum, and ale, singing meanwhile all sorts of droll songs. The occasion was likely to become a little lively, and Mr. Woodforde was often nervous lest one or more of his guests should become "forward" or "disguised," but usually nothing untoward happened.

The parson had duties with those below the rank of farmer. On Christmas Day he had the poor of the parish in to dinner and gave them each a shilling, among them the parish clerk, James Smith. On Valentine's Day he bestowed a penny apiece on such children as knocked at his door.

He was more taken up with the many dinners that were the custom of the circle he had come into. It will be recalled that he had become a member of a club called the Rotation. One of the early dinners to that body was on a dark night, and most of the guests stayed at the parsonage till next morning rather than venture over the rutted roads. Three of them, including the host, played cards till six in the morning, at that hour serenading the folk abed by playing on the hautboy. At another dinner, this time for clergymen and their wives, Mr. Woodforde served mackerel, three young chickens boiled, a neck of pork roasted, bacon, and a gooseberry pie hot. "We laughed immoderately after dinner on Mrs. Howes' being sent to Coventry" (she was set off by herself and addressed by no one). It was such incidents that gave life to the party and Mr. Woodforde plumed himself not only on the food he served but on the liveliness of the occasion.

There was presently a change in the parson's household arrangements. He got rid of his nephew. Later his sister and her son, and his niece, Nancy Woodforde, arrived from Somerset in the "London machine." When his sister and her son returned to the west, Nancy stayed on with her uncle to be his housekeeper and hostess. She was then twenty-two years old and was to remain with him

twenty-three years, making fairly smooth the path of a slightly difficult but not ill-natured bachelor. People and merriment she brought to the parsonage, and that was not displeasing to her uncle. She had a capacity for pleasure in little things, almost a Gallic gift for savouring episodes. Above all she was good company, at her liveliest usually in the evening, at parties, or after the party was over, when she and her uncle had come home and were comparing notes and laughing about what had happened.

From the start her presence meant an influx of women. The diary becomes full of the movements of Mrs. Davy and her young daughter, Betsy, who were constantly in and out of the parsonage. Mr. Woodforde seems at first to have suspected no designs on the part of the widow, and to have been as friendly to her as she was to him. On New Year's Eve there were fine goings-on at the parsonage. Nancy and Betsy locked the parson in the great parlour, fell on him, and pulled his wig almost to pieces. At another time they were as merry as could be. "I took off Mrs. Davy's garter to-night and kept it. I gave her my pair of garters and I am to have her other tomorrow." The episode is not out of an eighteenth-century novel, but in the quiet existence of a genteel member of the cloth.

That quiet existence was now and then interrupted by trips to the county town of Norwich. There the parson stopped at the King's Head, and would go round paying his bills and doing various errands. He happened to be in town when a celebration was in progress for British victories in the Caribbean. For a while he watched the bonfires and the firing of cannon, and then went off to see a performance of *The Plain Dealer*. Next morning he was about, tasting at Priest's wine shop, ordering some rum and Holland geneva, or gin, there, and at other shops buying presents for Nancy.

The temptation to make an excursion to Norwich was one sel-

dom resisted. In that town there was always entertainment. At the Rampant Horse could be viewed the learned pig which would spell any word or number from the figures or letters placed before it. An equal wonder was the female doll with a trumpet in its mouth, which answered every question put to it. The parson might visit the public gardens or be taken over the iron foundry, one of the wonders of industry that was beginning to engage attention. He might drop in at the assembly rooms and hear a pleasant lecture on the fashionable subject of astronomy. From such diversions he would return to the King's Head for tea and step in afterwards at the Priests'.

When there was announced a series of concerts in Norwich, Mr. Woodforde made up a party to hear them, and Nancy, Mrs. Davy, Betsy and two others went with him. "Madame Mara . . . sung delightfully. I never heard so fine a voice—her notes so high. The kettle drums from Westminster Abbey sounded charmingly. . . . Near a hundred performers in the orchestra." The next day they went to hear Madame Mara again, in *Judas Maccabaeus*. Altogether the party cost the parson seven pounds. "It was a dear frolic, but nevertheless I should have been sorry that my niece had not went to it. It also gave me pleasure." But the music festival two years later he did not subscribe for, "having had enough of the last music meeting."

Occasionally when he had friends visiting, he liked to go farther afield than Norwich, to Lowestoft and Yarmouth and other ports. The beaches, the quays, the ships in the harbour proved interesting to him, and more so to his niece who had never looked upon the sea before. What is remarkable about the parson's journeys is that he showed none of that interest in old churches and ruined castles common in his generation.

Returned from his trips he would resume with Nancy the visiting back and forth. The two of them would dine at the Bodhams',

a clerical family who lived in comfortable circumstances not far away. There he met again the great diner-out, Mr. Du Quesne.

Mrs. Custance would come up to the parsonage in her coach and demand that Nancy and the parson return with her to Weston House for dinner. She seldom appeared without bringing a present or two, a "fine India fan, another for common use . . . a fine tortoise shell shuttle, and also a pretty straw basket for to hold work." All that pleased the parson. "Mrs. Custance is very fond of Nancy, and so is she of her."

The Custance approval brought other important neighbours to call. Mr. Charles Townshend of Honingham dropped in one morning and walked round the garden with the parson. Dr. Thorne, the physician of the district, who had already been to the house to inoculate the servants, came to call, followed later by Mr. Du Quesne and Mr. Priest; after tea there was a game of quadrille. The Bacons of Earham—Lady Bacon was a sister of Mrs. Custance—and other landed families Mr. Woodforde and his niece met at dinners, usually at the Custances. The landed people the parson was interested to meet, but he was hardly at home with them. After dining with the Bishop of Norwich and a baronet, he wrote in his diary that he preferred the company of his equals. It is to be observed, however, that he was less afraid of the gentry than of the Bishop, which was not unnatural.

From the time that Nancy had come into his home, she figured in almost every page of his diary. It is impossible not to become as interested in her as in her uncle, but unhappily we have to depend upon him for our knowledge of her. It is doubtful indeed if Nancy ever shared her deeper thoughts with her uncle. Certainly he put down little that gives us an understanding of her; almost never does he quote her comments. It is upon his incidental allusions to her doings and opinions that we have to depend.

Yet we can infer something about her, at least in her relations

with her uncle and with the circle in which they both moved. If they did not always see alike about members of their circle, notably in the case of Mrs. Davy, in general they approved the same families and shared the same dislikes; their judgments were based upon the same codes of middle-class people of their time. They had the same tradition about careful housekeeping and probably the same pleasure in good food. They were neither of them great readers, and yet, when there was nothing else to do, both of them liked to read or be read to in the evening. Nancy had some knowledge of music and some skill in singing, as was thought becoming in a woman.

She was of course much younger than her uncle, and she must have been in any case a livelier person. It was her liveliness that the parson relished, and indeed depended upon. "Nancy was very entertaining this afternoon," he set down, and we could wish that he had given us clues as to the way she talked. Had she some magic more than liveliness, perhaps some gift of drollery? When she was away for a few days her uncle wrote: "I was very dull and low . . . now Nancy is from home." Mrs. Custance's many trips to the vicarage tell us plainly enough that she too liked to listen to Nancy, and it is fairly apparent that the easily bored Mr. Du Quesne gravitated naturally in her direction. "Stout, merry and jolly" is his comment upon her in a letter, and that is just what she looks in her portrait.

She was always being asked by her friends in the wide neighbourhood to visit them, so much so that the parson was occasionally a bit jealous and was prevailed upon with difficulty to assent to her trips. Naturally there was less objection when he was asked to accompany her or to ride over to dinner at the house where she was stopping.

If it was Mrs. Custance who summoned Nancy his objections were waived. That good lady dragged her off to Weston House,

and thence to Norwich to see *The School for Scandal*. Mr. Woodforde was pleased to learn afterwards from Mr. Du Quesne, or possibly from a nearer source, that Mrs. Custance and Nancy had made the best appearance of any at the play. When Mrs. Custance had a friseur at Weston House she asked Nancy over to have her hair dressed, and insisted upon paying the half guinea fee. No wonder the parson, who was not unthrifty, thought the squire's wife the best lady he had ever known. It was to her credit with him that she had a way of admiring whatever Nancy acquired, especially the gifts which her uncle had bestowed upon her. She must have believed in encouraging Mr. Woodforde in good works.

With all their engagements, Nancy and the parson spent most of their evenings at home. "Nancy and self very merry this evening," he once set down. Often they played cribbage, or if there were guests in the house, quadrille or loo. Mr. Woodforde would advance his niece the money with which to play and was often able to win it back. On other evenings he read a history of England to her; at one point he tried to teach her Latin, but the lessons were not continued, nor had a sudden interest in Aristotle lasted longer. She read more faithfully in a new novel, *Evelina*, loaned her by the mistress of Weston House. "There are three volumes of it—wrote by a Miss Burney—they are very clever and sensible."

In the earlier part of the day, the parson and his niece did not always hit it off so well. At breakfast time Mr. Woodforde was likely to be in a bad humour and had the knack of making his niece uneasy, as when he advised her to eat less and hurt her feelings so much that she hardly touched food for a day. He persuaded her to stay at church for the sacrament, noting it down that it was the first time she had ever received it. She was not too regular in church attendance, and the parson did not like that. Nancy was of

this world and understood no doubt that her uncle was only a little less so, save in his professional capacity.

It was about Mrs. Davy, however, that they came at length to real difference. At first Mr. Woodforde had liked the widow, but her many comings and goings had proved at length too much for him. She was, he believed, putting extravagant notions into his niece's head, and he could not forbear giving her a talk on the subject; she became almost angry, but by evening "she was convinced."

But not for long. Mrs. Davy continued to occupy the centre of Nancy's stage and to supply her with romance near at hand. This man was distracted about the widow and that man frantic, thus the news was relayed by Nancy to her uncle, who was interested in the news, as in all personal news, but not in the way Mrs. Davy may have hoped. As for Nancy it was all better than a novel.

The plot thickened, and Nancy was the happy confidante, while her uncle had to pick up what he could from her. Despite the widow's popularity one man had written, it appeared, to break off with her; she was in distress, and was often at Weston parsonage. Nothing would do but Nancy must go to Norwich with her, and when Mr. Woodforde put down his foot on that, both women were indignant. Moreover, Mrs. Davy wanted a mere twenty pounds from Nancy, and Mr. Woodforde refused to supply it.

He was drawn further into the drama, and it was gratifying to him that Nancy knew nothing of it. The Mr. Smith who had broken off with the widow arranged to meet Mr. Woodforde in the churchyard and had much to say. Mrs. Davy was as artful a woman as could be found. This news the parson was not unprepared to hear. When next he parted with Nancy's friend, he was "rather cool than otherwise."

The comedy of the situation, as it appears to the reader of the diary, escaped Mr. Woodforde and his niece, for the widow and



her daughter were managing to estrange the two at the parsonage. "I sent Nancy and Betsy Davy yesterday morn' to Coventry and have not as yet spoke to either of them." On the next day he kept them still in Coventry, but released them the following afternoon, St. Valentine's Day. Poor Nancy! One wonders just how the household was carried on when the parson would not speak to her. Did she have her meals in her room, or was dinner a scene of silence? Did she take her punishment submissively? It was not her way to be submissive. Too often the parson was complaining that at breakfast she was "bluff" or "pert."

But the Davy drama reached its dénouement. A Mr. Walker, who turned up in the community, a presentable young man and a good singer, paid court to Betsy, using the parsonage meanwhile as a hotel and base of operations. To the parson he was an ally of the feminine confederacy against him. Then one day Mr. Woodforde learned from the squire that Walker had been using their two names to run up bills with the shopkeepers, holding out the prospect that he would soon come into Betsy's money. When writs came out against Walker and that smooth gentleman disappeared, the parson was far from broken up; Nancy had hurt herself, he was inclined to believe, by association with such people. As for the Davy women he hoped never to see them again. What Nancy thought we are not told, and her uncle was probably not informed. She does not seem to have suffered in the estimation of the community. After all Mrs. Custance was too fond of Nancy to allow what had happened to affect her friendship, and Mrs. Custance had weight. And the parson soon forgot his annoyance.

He had a real affection for Nancy, and it always became evident when she was ill, and that was not infrequently. When she had the "intermitting fever" her uncle was worried, and dosed her with rhubarb; he summoned Dr. Thorne who prescribed the same remedy and a vomit, and later brought her "bark," that is, quinine.

Within a week Nancy was herself again, and in those high spirits which did the parson good to see. But another time she was ill for much longer. "I went up to see her in the evening," wrote Mr. Woodforde, "and she was very low and cried a good deal." He recounted intestinal details with old-time elaboration and was really concerned for his niece. "To see her in the pains," he wrote, "made one's heart ache again." These words are the nearest the parson comes in his diary to expressing emotion, save when his mother died.

It will be seen that the chronicles of Nancy can hardly be separated from those of her uncle. The story of their social life can only be suggested by the mention of a few parties; in many of the parties the record is unhappily an account of the food served and perhaps a verdict upon it. At a dinner in a home near Mat-tishall the parson and his niece were served "boiled beef, roast and boiled chicken, part of a fine ham, a couple of ducks roasted, and pease-pudding, tarts and cheese cakes." After supper a Miss Betsy Donne of London, who was about seventeen and very lively, sang to the party "all night long." Next day the parson wrote: "Very flat and dull on leaving my dear Miss Betsy Donne," but continued: "We [meaning himself and his niece] are both glad that this week is over." It had been a round of gaiety, and even the party-loving Nancy was glad to sit at home. Her uncle who was forty-four, although not too aged to be a little taken with "a fine showy girl," was far enough along, not to avoid festivities, but to regret them afterwards. There were other dinners aplenty, those at Mr. Du Quesne's and at the Custances being beyond reproach. The Custance dinners with the variety of food were memorable. Once there was a "very pretty pyramid of jelly in the centre, a landscape appearing through the jelly." At other homes the dinners were less impressive. The Bodhams were dependable friends, but their hospitality was not quite up to the parson's standard.

The Jeaneses, a clerical family that had come into the neighbourhood, gave dinners that were not well cooked and that were "pretentious." It was whispered that the housekeeping there was not overly clean, and Mr. Du Quesne had found the beds hard.

There were livelier parties at the Priests' in Norwich, impromptu affairs when the country came to town. Some of the guests might give a concert with seven pieces, or Nancy sing and Mr. Du Quesne and two more play on the violin and others on the bass-viol. When a country dance followed, Mr. Woodforde took part.

It has possibly been indicated that the parson was interested in what he ate. Nancy must have been a skilled manager to give him the variety and quality that he expected, but there is evidence that he sometimes took part in planning the meals. He rejoiced in large dishes, a great pike, a prodigious large goose, exhibition pieces in food. Scores of entries give away his satisfaction with what was set before him. "I had a prodigious fine sirloin of beef roasted with quantities of plum puddings. We also began on mince pieces today at dinner." "We had for dinner today the finest and fattest turkey cock roasted that ever I saw. It was two inches thick in fat upon the breast after it was roasted." He dreamed one night of "a most elegant dinner served up—particularly fish." Among all foods he had the nicest taste in fish, and a memory as well. He bestowed a shilling upon a man with a "petition," recalling that this was the man who had once brought him some "very indifferent sprats." Three years before it was that the parson had bought those sprats, and he had not forgotten their indifferency.

If he used food as a measuring rod, he was no less fastidious about clothes and manners. In those respects the squire and Mr. Du Quesne were models, but the Jeanes family fell as far short of his approval in their clothes and behaviour as in their dinners. Mr. Jeanes had come from New College, and Mr. Woodforde had felt called upon to be cordial and could not in any case snub

people whom the community had taken up. With one of their guests, "a Miss Mist out of the West Country," who was "about seventeen, very delicate and pleasing," he was charmed. But from the outset Nancy and he had shared reservations about the Jeanes household. Mr. Jeanes's clothes were too frenchified and Mrs. Jeanes's manners affected; she "talked very consequential."

A certain well-bred simplicity was preferred by Mr. Woodforde; he liked those who had seen good company, that is, in our language, with social experience, people like the Barnwells. "Mr. Barnwell is a gentleman of considerable property, much afflicted with the gout, has travelled a good deal over England, and well acquainted with families."

If the parson preferred high-bred simplicity and families of enough means to have gout, he was not less interested, in another way, of course, in those smaller people with whom the routine of his clerical life brought him in contact. A considerable part of his duty was involved with those events that make up vital statistics, with births, deaths and marriages. Births meant baptisms and the churching of mothers, deaths meant burial services often in wintry churchyards. Weddings were more likely to occur in the spring; among the villagers they were usually simple ceremonies with few present save the two most concerned. For all those functions he had fees due him; those for baptisms and funerals he usually retained; the churching and marriage fees he was accustomed in the case of the poor to give back.

Marriages gave him the most anxiety. Under the bastardy act of 1733 a woman could go before a justice of peace and charge a man with being the father of her expected child. The man was then imprisoned until he gave security to indemnify the parish for the expense of the child, or until he married the woman, and thus assumed the expense. It was a law that induced men in order to regain their liberty to go through the wedding ceremony. The

parson described such a marriage. "Rode to Ringland this morning and married . . . by licence . . . the man being in custody, the woman being with child by him. The man was a long time before he could be prevailed on to marry her when in the churchyard; and at the altar behaved very unbecoming. . . . It is very disagreeable to me to marry such persons." The parson was more distressed at "compulsive marriages" than at baptizing "spurious" children. That was all in the day's work. It is true, however, that he once refused to support an elderly man's application to run an inn because three years earlier he had got a female servant in trouble.

Mr. Woodforde was far from conceiving his duties as merely ceremonial. Whatever person, man, woman, or child, was ill, he would be over at once, even when the disease was contagious, and would read prayers or, if necessary, administer the sacrament. It is impossible to say whether the spiritual consolations he offered were purely formal, or whether he was able to make the villagers feel his genuine and natural sympathy. But this is to be said, that he was always ready to give more than spiritual help; he would send medicine or leave a few shillings to be spent upon necessities.

For other misfortunes besides illness the parson felt called upon to reach out his hand and purse. A farmer lost a cow, and two other farmers visited the parson asking him to draw up a "petition" for the man. A petition was an authorization to seek alms and was headed usually by the squire and the parson. A kind of village accident insurance is what it amounted to, with the well-to-do paying most of the premiums. In the case of this particular petition Mr. Woodforde not only signed it, but donated five shillings himself, with the result that the farmer was able to raise two guineas, some of it no doubt from the squire, who was accustomed to double the parson's subscription.

Much of Mr. Woodforde's energy was taken up with his own

land and servants. How many acres went with the vicarage we do not know, but we observe that he sold wheat, barley, oats and hay, and cropped a lot of turnips, as Norfolk farmers in that day were likely to do. Most of the time he had three male servants. The youngest was the "skipjack," who received ten shillings a year. The most important was Ben Leggat, son of a village yeoman, who did the ploughing and field work, looked after the selling of wheat and other crops in Norwich, brought coal from that metropolis, and had charge of the horses and cows. For those services he received ten pounds a year and his keep. The parson's body-servant, Will Coleman, whom he had brought with him from Somerset, accompanied his master on trips, went back and forth to Norwich with letters and parcels, took messages to the neighbours, and waited at table, for which he received four guineas a year and later five. Will was far from the best of servants; again and again he would come home tipsy; at a tithe frolic he got out of hand, "beating about the maids in a terrible manner," and finished off by jumping in the pond, from which he had to be pulled out by Ben. His shortcomings distressed Mr. Woodforde who would talk to him "very quietly." It was no use. After eleven years of service he was discharged. Poor Will lingered about the neighbourhood, coming back to the accustomed quarters like an old dog, but was not re-employed, and found his way at length back to Somerset.

There were often changes in the personnel of the household staff. When Sukey confessed herself with child, she was at once sent to the justice of peace to swear as to the identity of the child's father, was later reprimanded by the parson, and then sent away with her year's wages. In that time Sukey would not have suffered long for her indiscretion, but within a couple of years would probably have married some man in the village and have lived afterwards as happily as others.

Other changes occurred at intervals. The senior maid left to

get married, and the skipjack decided that he was ready to be a ploughboy to a farmer. When the under-maid went away, Molly Dade was brought in her place, and impressed the parson with her industry, smartness and good looks. When she fell ill of a fever, the parson was alarmed and dosed her with tar water, but Molly was ill with that malady of housemaids, consumption, and had to be sent home. Her sister, Betty, was taken in her place, and was to stay with the parson the rest of his life. Mr. Woodforde continued to make inquiries about Molly, and on her death, recorded his certainty of her happiness in another world.

Notwithstanding all his servants the parson was his own bailiff and did not hesitate to put his hand to the work. He helped bleed the three horses and showed his new servant, Briton, who had taken Will's place, how to make beer, and had to repeat the lesson several times. What is more significant, once when the servants were away, Mr. Woodforde was "with pleasure under the necessity of assisting at dinner."

His natural consideration for his servants is evident throughout the diary. It was his habit to give them extras now and then for special services. They were allowed to go off to tea or dinner with the servants at Weston House or to invite the servants there over to the parsonage. When the pedlar, with his cart of goods, or the ratcatcher, who turned up once a year, or workmen on some special job, stopped at the parsonage, they were asked to dinner with the servants. If there were a celebration, a fair, or a hanging in a nearby town, the servants were given leave to attend; one of them was even given money to go to the theatre. When Nancy, a maid at the parsonage, lost her father and had to bear part of the funeral expenses, the parson went into his own pocket to help her. When the servants fell ill of a complaint, called by the physicians the Whirligigousticon, Mr. Woodforde dosed them one and all and summoned Dr. Thorne, who prescribed quinine.

Baptizing, marrying, burying parishioners, looking after servants, it was a routine that went on year after year, with this and that variant. There is a monotony in the parson's diary which is like that we all know and complain about, but would soon miss. What changes with us, and changed with him, is the circle of friends. Old friends turn up less often or leave the scene, and new people come to the door. The middle years of Mr. Woodforde's sojourn at Weston parsonage were to bring alterations in the group that he and Nancy knew. The Custances and Mr. Du Quesne had been in the community longer even than the parson and Nancy and had proved dependable friends, without whom the round of days would have been pretty dull.

For some time yet they were near at hand. Mr. Custance was always dropping in, and was chatty about local affairs and about news from London, which interested him rather more than it did the parson. Mrs. Custance would be over in the morning with two or three of her offspring and would stay till early afternoon. The parson would put out his toy boat on the fishpond and sail it, to the delectation of the children.

Mrs. Custance had babies at frequent intervals. Until he examines the chronology the reader is under the impression that she did as well by her husband as Lady Margaret, the Earl's daughter, did by her forester friend in the greenwood, presenting him with seven sons in seven years. When a new child would arrive at Weston House, word would soon get round. Mr. Woodforde would be called upon to baptize the infant and would receive afterwards a folded piece of paper from Mr. Custance containing five pounds. Within a few weeks the parson might have to bury the child, but the Custances were undiscouraged, and went on having children.

In 1791 Mrs. Custance became seriously ill with rheumatic pains in her head and teeth. Three teeth were drawn. On New Year's Day the parson put into his diary a prayer for her recovery.



But that seemed to avail nothing, and Nancy found her friend unable to move herself even a little in bed, "owing, it is supposed, to some violent strain in the backbone on childbearing." It was not until May thirtieth that the parson could write: "Great rejoicings at Weston House, etc., bells ringing, guns firing, etc., on account of Mrs. Custance coming downstairs for the first time for the last five months. I gave my people on the occasion a bottle of gin to drink this evening in kitchen."

It was sad news to the two at the parsonage when they learned that the squire had decided to move to Bath for the education of his children. "It is a great, very great loss to us indeed," wrote Mr. Woodforde, with more emphasis than he usually allowed himself.

But Mr. Du Quesne was still in the community, Mr. Du Quesne who was a friendly old soul, and liked Nancy and the parson. He was always in and out of the parsonage, and he had an old bachelor's affection for Nancy. He missed few Rotation dinners, and he was wont to bring his violin along. He was dining or staying with his cousins, the Townshends, at their great house; he was on good terms with the Sir Edmund Bacons. When in London he accepted the hospitality of the Archbishop of Canterbury, a cousin of his neighbours, the Cornwallises. Of course society sometimes got on his old bachelor nerves, and Mr. Woodforde would find him low and inclined to fret. He was tied by the leg, he would aver, in dancing backward and forward to the Townshends. When visiting Wales as Chancellor of St. David's, he complained in a letter to the parson: "No less than twenty ladies and gentlemen in the house, at breakfast, dinner, and supper, with concerts, balls, and late suppers every night, feasting, etc. So that I have been in a constant fever and depressed spirits all the while." He longed for a more moderate life, "for one may have too much of a good thing." He fretted, he was continually harassed by company, but he continued

to go on visiting. His philosophy was contained in a letter to the parson: "As things happen so, so I must make the best of them."

It was not very hard to make the best of things. Mr. Du Quesne was vicar of East Tuddenham and rector of Osmondiston; he had a prebendal stall at Ely, another at Lichfield; he was Chancellor Canon of St. David's in Wales. Moreover, his cousin had turned over to him an old manorial place near East Tuddenham, known as Berry House, or Berries, and here he lived very well, with several servants, and incidentally a bowling green. He had an unusual head-servant, Betty England, who was treated by his friends as a housekeeper and asked by Mr. Woodforde to tea in his study. When Mr. Du Quesne went off on trips, he would write Betty his experiences, and she would apprise him of all the neighbourhood gossip. Mr. Du Quesne liked all his friends, great landed folk and small curates; he managed to get along, so far as we can tell, with the wives of all the clergymen in the vicinity, no small task; he was never, as the rest of them, engaged in a coolness with a neighbour. However much he growled about his invitations, he was certain to accept them unless otherwise engaged, and he was always dropping in to dinner at Weston House. He liked society in the broadest sense of the word, and he was generally the soul of cheer, unless he had a cold.

As he grew older he became even more restive about engagements. He made his will, leaving much to Betty England and something to her grandchild, but he was not planning to die just yet. The parson often met him at dinner and observed that he looked poorly and complained a good deal, but ate apparently tolerably well. Not even advanced years should interfere with his eating, as the parson knew very well, but he worried about his friend as to other matters: "Mr. Du Quesne is very far advanced in years, but he will not own it. He is by no means fit to drive a single horse-chaise. . . . He cannot see the ruts distinctly, he will not,

however, wear spectacles at all. He cannot bear to appear old, but he must be as young in anything as the youngest person." The curse had come upon him, the curse of an old body housing a spirit that would fain be young. He resisted his age bravely. "Mr. Du Quesne looked very poorly, complained much, eat however pretty tolerably and was jocose." It was when the parsonage family was away in the west that they learned of the death of their friend. When they returned to Weston they went to see Betty England, who was becomingly disconsolate.

Other friends appeared on the horizon. Mr. Maynard, a neighbour cleric, took to calling often at the parsonage. He was a kindly soul and brought gossip with him, but his visits seemed to make little impression. His weakness was presently understood in the community. Mrs. Custance and Lady Bacon on crossing the field had run into Maynard "disguised in liquor," and it turned out that he had been baptizing a child and had perhaps done too well by the refreshments offered. It behooved the parson to keep a friendly eye on him. When Maynard dropped in to tea one afternoon, it was evident that he was "rather bosky," and the parson wrote: "I did not ask him to drink anything besides tea, as I saw that he did not want anything else."

The Micklethwaites and the Branthwaites, two interrelated families, came to live in commodious houses, and were a bit slow, the parson thought, in returning his calls. But when he was asked to their excellent dinners, he was mollified, and the more so when he saw their carriages in front of his church on Sunday. These new people wore the kind of clothes and gave the kind of dinners that went with gentility, but the parson was not deceived and put them down as "strange and vulgar." Both families were obviously people who had made money in the last generation and were now going in for horses and hounds, branching out as gentlefolk. By and by Mr. Micklethwaite fell into a decline and

died, but Mrs. Micklethwaite still came to church, played cards, and was seen at parties, until she too at length went into a decline. When the Micklethwaite effects were sold the parson bought two pieces. As for Mr. Branthwaite, he left Taverham along with his horses, his hounds and his carriages. "It is reported," wrote the parson, "that he lived too fast." That may well have been. It was no uncommon story, that of the family who won means in two or three hard-working generations and dissipated them in the first leisurely one.

But there were always new people. The Corboulds took Hungate Lodge where the Micklethwaites had flourished. Mr. Corbould was a clergyman without a living and with some income, a type apparently common in Norfolk at this time, the son of a retired hatter in Norwich. The Corboulds did themselves well at Hungate Lodge, and the parson had to admit the good taste of their furnishings, and had nothing to say against the cooking. But he did have his prejudices against those in retail trade, was amused at the elderly Mr. Corbould (he had had many a hat from him) who came to visit his son, and would complain when he lost a shilling at quadrille.

It was in such social observation that the parson was at his best.

What is disappointing is that he had so little interest in the world just beyond his doorstep. Fields and hedges, slopes and woods were to him places where hares might be coursed. He had no eyes for the swaying of the grass in the wind or the colours of the fields. True he was not more blind in that respect than most of his contemporaries.

We must put it down to his credit that he marked the seasons, as country clergymen today; he noticed primroses in mid-January and at the end of November, and the first swallows in April. The coming on of vegetation in the spring he watched with pleasure;

he had much less to say about the fall of the year. On the twenty-fifth of November, 1795, he observed the presence of blackbirds and thrushes, and six days later wrote: "There was a fine thrush singing in one of our plantations almost all the day, as if spring." That thrush was surely the predecessor of Thomas Hardy's thrush, who sang in late autumn with such zest as if he had some hidden joy of which others were unaware.

It was coming on autumn for the parson, and there were few hidden joys. He had come to that part of the road where one proceeded slowly, where there were rough surfaces ahead and an uphill grade. Before retiring he would take rhubarb; he was conscious of what he called the flying gout. That his meals and his port—he had been fond of port since the Oxford days—had anything to do with his pain he had no wish to guess. "Living too low won't at all agree with my gouty constitution and past fifty-four years of age." He took seven glasses of port and felt better; the pain in his great toe later was unpleasant, but was evidence that in other respects he was in good health. He was far from that, as the attentive reader cannot but notice.

In the winter of 1795 he was absent from his duty in Weston church from mid-January to nearly the end of March. That summer he went to Somerset in June and did not return till the 5th of November. Even his easy routine was proving too much for him.

He took the step of employing a curate to carry the services, at first only for six months. His own income from the living would continue for life, and Mr. Corbould was glad of the thirty pounds a year. For some time Corbould did well enough, but at length became careless; moreover, he had a way of going out to parties on Saturday night, which to Mr. Woodforde was unbecoming in a clergyman.

Once freed from conducting his services, Mr. Woodforde was

seldom at Weston church. His health, he thought, did not permit it. What is more surprising is that, while he wrote with becoming sadness of giving up his work, he betrayed little of that uneasiness about the absence of accustomed routine common among those that retire.

If the parson was failing, his niece was showing, had indeed long been showing signs of boredom. As far back as 1789, when she was about thirty-two, her uncle had set down: "Nancy very discontented of late, and runs out against living in such a dull place," and the entries in the diary continue to indicate her unhappiness. Was Nancy weary of her single state? The answer is not as easy as that. As a young woman she had suffered from the King's Evil, that is, scrofula, and had perhaps early given up the hope of marriage.

It is more probable that the slowing up of the social pace in her circle was unwelcome. She liked company and the merry-go-round of parties. There were still invitations and dinners, but the parsonage crowd was getting older and less disposed to gaiety. It is possible, too, that Nancy was a little spoiled by her many jaunts to Somersetshire and forgot that if she were in Somerset all the time that county might have proved as dull as Norfolk.

Her dissatisfaction may have been deeper. On one of her excursions to Somerset, Nancy had been told by her plain-spoken cousin, Fan, that she was like Nan Stride, "an old woman who goes about in errands." Nancy may have had a touch of that nervous restlessness that is too lightly assumed to be a modern infirmity. In the round of household duties there was nothing to look forward to, no end towards which to set one's days.

Who, indeed, would blame her? Her artist brother wrote glowingly of what he was accomplishing in London and of his hopes, and she was giving up her best years to an ageing and querulous man.

But if she was often low in her mind, if she seemed to her uncle sometimes saucy or sulky, it was by no means always so. Her capacity for sympathy was not exhausted, and the parson drew upon it more than he realized. Mr. Woodforde was past the age when he delighted to give her presents and he had not many good words for her. But once on New Year's Day, 1796, when he turned over to her the annual ten pounds due her, he added ten shillings, as he had not done for years. She had happened to please him that day.

The years brought changes among the villagers. With apprehension the parson marked the illness of his old parish clerk, James Smith, who had been with him since the first Sunday at Weston. Mr. Woodforde would go to visit him and leave a shilling. In his time he had had his troubles with James; the clerk had been a "shocking hand" at leading the singing; upon one occasion he had been guilty of digging a grave too short for the coffin, and the burial service had been interrupted. "I gave it to James," Mr. Woodforde had recorded at the time. But that was long ago, and now the clerk was going fast to his last home, and an old relationship was coming to an end. The parson continued to send the clerk money and food. It was when he was away in Somerset that he learned of his death.

The servants had not been changed for a long time. Ben Leggatt still went to Norwich and did the buying and selling for the household. Betty Dade had been head female servant for years and a dependable one; when the parson and Nancy had been away in Somerset, Betty had taken things into her own hands and had discharged a servant for the customary foible among female servants. The matter had been "very well managed by Betty," the parson remarked, and he gave her a new gown. He could not be so enthusiastic about Briton, still his personal servant, who would

come home "muzzed" and be discharged, but would manage to stay on nevertheless.

It was only near the end of the diary that the equanimity of the servant quarters was seriously disturbed. When the steady-going Betty Dade fell ill and was not easily cured, Nancy suspected a love affair with Ben, and that he had been neglecting her. "I hope," wrote Mr. Woodforde with a suspicion he should not have allowed himself, "he hath not been too intimate with her."

Betty could guess that there would soon be a change at the parsonage. She had once been engaged to a farmer's son who had died, and had remained on friendly terms with the farmer and his wife. But she was now thirty-six and may have thought it best to choose the least of evils among husbands and secure a home of her own. The parson was unsure what was happening to Betty. Only death would curb his curiosity about those around him. Now he heard that Ben had scolded Betty for accepting Tom Leggatt, his cousin, now that Betty had accepted Ben, and again that Betty was going to marry Tom. Unless some antiquarian searches among parish records we shall hardly learn at what decision Betty arrived.

We have come to the parson's last years. In novels those years are often pictured as graced by serenity. The hero looks out upon life with detachment, his tongue utters wisdom, he is surrounded by troops of friends. It is seldom that way in diaries. In those accounts it is likely to be the least heroic phase of life, a phase which the kindly reader hurries over.

Mr. Woodforde's last years, from the time he was fifty-seven till his death at sixty-three, were not his best. In 1797 when the parson was fifty-seven, he was so sick that his brother and sister-in-law were summoned from Somerset. According to his own account, as he wrote it afterwards, he had been quite senseless. He recovered, but he was not what he had been. He had fainting spells;



he had to be supported coming downstairs; he lay awake almost all night, or so he thought, as old men will think. But he always felt better after dinner or when he drank some brandy. He could no longer take any part in the life of the community, but he still kept tab on what went on in the church. His natural force was abating, but his interest in his world had not waned.

Yet his mind was chiefly concerned with his illness. Like many old men he began to suffer from fear. Death he did not mention, but he drew a hand with a long pointed finger on the page of his diary opposite the comment on his health, "My spirits or the *Vis Vitae* almost extinguished." That was only ten months before his death.

He did not seem to be preparing himself for another world, as might have been expected. His parishioners he had watched fade slowly towards their end and had comforted them with the hope of a future life. That comfort, if his diary is to be trusted, he did not now seek for himself. No doubt he believed sincerely enough in the next world, but he was a sick man; it took an act of imagination to envisage the hereafter, and he was too ill for such effort. He had nothing to fall back upon but thoughts of himself.

He expected increasing attention and sympathy from Nancy and even resented her occasional goings-out. She continued to be "pert" and "saucy" and "sulky"; he now called her "Miss Woodforde," and wrote: "A. M. W. when she came downstairs never asked me how I did or took the least notice of my being so lame or anything else." No doubt Nancy with all her helpfulness found it hard to respond to constant calls for sympathy. She avoided church a good deal, and her uncle, eager to learn who had been present, was inclined to find fault with her about that. Twice he delayed giving her the ten pounds that was due her at the New Year.

But Nancy was not so dependent upon him as hitherto. With

surprise the reader learns that Nancy had come into more than a thousand pounds and was investing it carefully. Only in the old-fashioned novels does the heroine fare so well. It was again a pleasure for Nancy to buy things, for the Custances had come back from Bath. Mrs. Custance had given her a Camperdown bonnet, and Nancy bought for herself a "picknick bonnet" which drew praise from her appreciative friend at Weston House, who had seen nothing like it in Norwich. Nancy had her mantua-maker, now one in London, make up for her a blue and white muslin gown.

The old days occasionally impinged upon the present. The Custances would ask Nancy over for a meal, but guests there were fewer. Mr. Custance was often over to see the parson, and the two would compare symptoms. The Squire was far from well and had ceased drinking port. The Custance young people dropped in frequently at Weston parsonage. The Townshends and the Bacons remembered old acquaintance by occasional calls or inquiries. Mrs. Bodham was still living at Mattishall, the last of the old clerical set with whom the parsonage had exchanged dinners, and Nancy kept in touch with her. Mr. Maynard was still about, but to the parson he looked weather-beaten and old. That Mr. Jeanes who had cut such a figure and given so many dinners, was reported to be in the King's Bench prison, and we may guess that Mr. Woodforde was not saddened by that mystery of Providence. It was indeed a memory of earlier days when Betsy Davy appeared for a moment on the scene. Mrs. Shrimpton was her name now, and the Shrimptons lived in a genteel way in Suffolk. Mr. Shrimpton, to be sure, was a Dissenter, but the parson noted nevertheless that the Shrimptons came in a "genteel whiskey," that is, a kind of small carriage then fashionable, and that they had a servant in attendance. If Nancy was pleased to see Betsy again, her uncle does not mention it, nor what had become of Mrs. Davy.

In the summer of 1802, the parson was in bad shape. His legs and thighs were swollen as if from dropsy and a weak heart. On the seventeenth of October he set down his last entry in the diary: "Very weak this morning, scarce able to put on my clothes and with great difficulty get downstairs with help. Mr. Dade read prayers and preached this morning at Weston church. Nancy at church. Mr. and Mrs. Custance and Lady Bacon at church. Dinner today, roast beef, etc." His last entry was of Weston church, of the Custances, of Nancy and of roast beef.

The following New Year's Day (1803) he died. Nancy, uprooted in mid-life, journeyed to London to visit her artist brother and then went to live out her days in Somerset, becoming known to a wide connection as Great Aunt Anne. We can imagine that she forgot her uncle's weaknesses and was always ready to talk of his virtues to such grand-nieces and grand-nephews as would listen. She died at Castle Cary in 1830 and was buried in the old home village of Ansford. She could not have guessed that her uncle had made her a minor immortal, but she would have enjoyed being a character in a book and would have deemed it "a very sensible thing."

With a Woodforde sense of the proprieties she had had a monument to her uncle put up in Weston church and you may see it there to this day. She need not have done so. The parson had set down on paper a record that will outlast even the fabric of Weston church.



## Thomas Tyldesley

**T**HOMAS TYLDESLEY was a Catholic country gentleman and a Jacobite. He lived in Lancashire in a country full of other gentlemen and yeomen of his faith. Those with whom he associated were many of them imprisoned and deprived of their lands or suffered death after the uprising of 1715.

But from the diary that he kept during the last three years of his life, just before the outbreak of the rebellion, it would seem that coming events did not greatly disturb him, that more than anything else, he was a merry old soul, who called for his friends and called for his bowl, who was fond of dogs and hunting, and who liked equally well a saddle, a road and an alehouse.

His ancestors were as good as the best in Lancashire. The Tyldesleys had been a landed family since early Tudor times; long before that there had been Tyldesleys who bore arms and figured in the county and even in London. Thomas's grandfather, Sir Thomas, had fought for Charles I and been slain at the skirmish of Wigan Lane in 1651, leaving a name that was part of Stuart memories. Thomas's father, Edward, had won the attention of Charles II and had hoped that the new King would do something towards restoring the fortunes of a family impoverished by their loyalty. In these hopes he had been disappointed, but had left a good deal of land as well as debts to his son.

The son, that Thomas whose last years concern us, had at least four habitations, only three of which need mention. The two principal ones were in the lowlands of Lancashire in the country close to Garstang, a country, as Defoe put it, "lock'd in between

the hills on one side high as the clouds, and prodigiously higher, and the sea on the other." Myerscough Lodge was about halfway between the moors and the sea and had been an ancestral home. Here Thomas's great-grandfather had entertained James I. Thomas's other dwelling place was at Fox Hall, which his father had erected on the coast above the estuary of the Ribble, where Blackpool stands today, a hunting lodge strongly built of cobblestones, where priests might hide, or Jacobites confer. In April, 1712, he had rented a town-house in Lancaster and made his abode there for some time.

His lands were mostly near Myerscough Lodge and Fox Hall, but some of them seem to have been scattered parcels here and there. Much of his property was in the hands of trustees or referees, who received at least £1,100 of the rentals from the tenants in behalf of the creditors. His financial position was growing steadily worse.

He was a restless man, wandering all over the country from southern Lancashire to the borders of Westmorland. If he were stopping overnight with Ned Winckley at Banister Hall, south of Preston, he was likely to be on his way next morning to dine at Dick Jackson's inn at Preston where he might meet Cousin Wadsworth or Gabriel Hesketh. From there he might proceed to Garstang for supper at Betty Wakefield's hostel and find Sany Butler and Dick Shuttleworth, both of them ready for conviviality. If he spent the night at his favourite White Bull in Lancaster, he might turn back next morning, halting at Tom Pickup's for a glass and arriving at Neppy's in Garstang in time to dine with Tom Richardson and Jack Leyburne. If his daily round was hardly so strenuous as that, there were days or two days together quite as crowded with inns and friends. What is amazing is to find him leaving alehouses or the homes of his friends at twelve or one or even two o'clock at night to return home. Of course he did not

always get up early. "I riss about nine, and after we had got our breakfast it was twelve."

He was restless, but he lived among people that loved company and inns. The lowlands to the west of the moors were not wanting in places of refreshment, and it is not surprising that Defoe found them a gay people in that part of the country. In Preston the same lively traveller observed that there was a great deal of good company, and Thomas would have confirmed that judgment. In every inn to which he rode he found himself at home. He was not averse to sleeping in the smaller hostels, and he did not seem to worry about their respective merits or to complain about beds or cooking. Like other travellers of his time he did not expect too much. It was companions that he craved.

He found them largely of course among other gentle families. Between such families there were not only many ties of relationship, but the old and binding tie of county loyalty. Even when the gentry of a county was split into factions over an election or over some long-continued feud between two of the greater families, the quarrel was merely another evidence of the essential unity. In many places it was the custom that the gentle families called upon one another; they met at weddings and funerals, at fairs and assizes.

A considerable part of the gentry of Lancashire was Catholic, and it was with them that Thomas most associated. They met secretly at the same religious services; they entertained the same priests in their houses, priests that were often the sons or brothers of the families that owned the house. The Catholic gentry were more likely than the Protestant to send their young men into the church, and those men, trained on the continent, with some width of experience, were rather a picked lot who were competent to give leadership and to knit together the community of Lancashire Catholics of which Thomas was a part.

There was much else to tie these families together, their sufferings for their faith. From the time of Elizabeth on they had to submit to a steady if intermittent drain of fines for non-attendance upon the services of the Established Church. The Civil Wars in the middle of the seventeenth century found the Catholics arrayed on the side of the Stuarts as against parliament, and the forfeitures and sequestrations that followed the defeat of Charles I cut seriously into the holdings of the Catholic landed classes. Most of them were still able to keep up their position, but seldom in the grand manner. When Charles II proved friendly to the Catholics and James II schemed to restore their faith as the religion of the state, they won the loyalty of the Lancashire Catholics, but the Revolution of 1689 had put Whig lords in the saddle and dimmed their hopes. Those hopes, however, were still alive. For the best part of a century there had been surprising changes, and there might be again. Who could tell at what moment the Stuarts might be restored and Catholicism receive toleration or more than toleration?

Thus there was much to keep Thomas loyal to his faith. If he seems in his diary reticent about his religion, it was nevertheless the largest factor in his life. Again and again he went to confession which he recorded simply as "X." When Dr. Hawarden, one of the important priests in the Lancashire circle, stopped at his house, there were always prayers, and when the priest was not there, Thomas was likely to seek out prayers at other houses. Before going on a hunt he would stop overnight at Aldcliffe or at Dimples, the home of the Plessingtons, for prayers. One night at eleven o'clock he went to Aldcliffe where Dr. Hawarden "preached gloriously." It was his custom when hunting over the moors to leave money, tobacco and ale at the pits if he happened to run into the colliers.

He expected others to be as faithful to the Roman service as he



was, and took notice of it when young Tom Carus, scion of one of the best-known of the Catholic families, attended the Established Church one morning and afternoon. Nor would he forgive Dr. Sherdy who had failed to pray for "our Master," that is, no doubt, the Pretender.

His allusion to Dr. Sherdy is one of the few indications in the diary of his hopes for the restoration of the Stuarts. Yet it is hardly likely that he confined himself to hope. There was a great deal of activity upon his part that is not wholly explicable, and it was with friends many of whom were later participants in the rebellion of 1715. He was now in the middle fifties when the constant stirring about from place to place, particularly at night, must have proved wearing. That such riding was merely out of pleasure is hard to believe. Again and again he wrote of seeing this or that person about "lodge business," presumably about his house, Myerscough Lodge. It was heavily mortgaged to be sure, but assiduity in seeking out one's creditors is not customary. He belonged to the mock corporation of Walton-le-Dale, a secret political body made up largely of men who were later concerned in the rebellion. Furthermore we observe his "honest good friend cousin Charles Rigby" moving in and out among Thomas's circle, referred to as "the admiral" and appearing at least once in disguise. Nor can it be overlooked that Thomas apparently cherished hopes of becoming Governor of Preston Gaol. It is possible of course that he aspired to that post merely for the income from it, but its usefulness to Jacobites in case of an uprising might have also been in his thoughts.

Whatever his hopes and share in plots, he was not restrained from the enjoyment of life in the meantime. If he had a wide circle of friends, he deserved them all. There was about him an expansive warm-heartedness and friendliness that could not be concealed even in the brief notes of the diary. He dubbed himself

"Old Dog Lad" and had a "brother Dog Lad." When he spoke of Ned Winckley of Banister Hall, it was always as "dear Ned" or "my dear true Ned" and even "my honest and never to be forgotten true friend Winckley." Brother Frost and brother Dalton were named as brothers merely out of affection. His physician, Dr. Worthington, was labelled as a "right worthy and griping free man."

Such phrases were not merely words with Thomas. He was apt in the ceremonies of friendship. Whenever grief or even a slight illness came to a family he was prompt to call. When friends came to see him he accompanied them a little way back towards their homes. When the wife of "brother" Dalton and daughter of Sir Piers Mostyn bore a child, Thomas and his wife called at once and left four shillings for the two maids, "for the Lady had made a she child." He took his part in christenings and did not confine himself to those conducted by Catholic priests. Like everyone else he went to funerals and found his friends there. Birthdays he remembered. He repaid a visit with what we call a bread-and-butter present, sending Mrs. Ned Winckley, after a stay at Banister Hall, a "style snuff box." When Lord Molyneux sent his victualler with a haunch of venison, Thomas had friends in to share the feast.

In turn his friends were equally thoughtful. They urged him to visit them in their homes; they sent him presents even without special occasion. Visits called for visits and presents for presents and so the merry game of friendliness went on. His friends went further; they sought to help him out with his mortgage problems, to aid him in finding money and in securing good tenants.

They stood by even in difficulties which today we would regard as a man's own affair in which others had best not meddle. When Thomas received an "ungrateful . . . letter" from Henry Wayles, landlord of an inn, he went to his friend, Frost, and showed it to him who at once accompanied Thomas to see Wayles

and "told Henry Wayles his own." It may be that the landlord had complained that Thomas did not patronize his inn enough or that Thomas was behind in paying his reckonings. At any rate one gentleman stood with another, and innkeepers had to be taught not to be rude. Thomas presently spent a half crown at Wayles's house, but never liked the "faw grumbler," though about a year later he did have the innkeeper and his wife to supper at his house.

This general good companionship shows through Thomas's pages. "Three bonny Scotch lads," who may have had Jacobite schemes to broach, came to see him and were treated with oysters and a good can of ale. With the sheriff and his jovial crew (jovell cru) that consisted of Lord Molyneux, Jack Leyburne and others, Thomas had lively evening parties. When some gentlemen came from Preston "purposely . . . to be merry," with their friends in Garstang, Thomas was too ill to join them, but received reports of their doings: "The gentlemen continue their jollity, but poor Tom in pain." On the next day he set down: "The gentlemen stick together, jolly and merry; I in pain all day."

Not all Thomas's boon companions were Catholic country gentlemen. There were among them citizens, mayors, and recorders of towns, sometimes lawyers. Now and then he consorted with Church of England parsons; with one of them he went fishing; by another he was entertained and "made much of."

There must have been few men in his neighbourhood whom he did not know, and they were all treated, so far as we can see, with a kind of rough equality. Certainly there were none to whom he seemed to defer. He was pleased when he could entertain the Duchess of Hamilton, but there is no reason to suppose that he was unduly impressed. He knew the value of titles, but the attention of the judges of the assize pleased him as much.

He was on good terms with his tenants. There were at least

thirty and probably more of them on the various lands that stood in his name, and he was always meeting one or another at the inn. He was glad to put them up for the night; his relation to them is given away in one episode. He spent the evening at the White Bull with Seath Jolly and Dick Gornall, paying for their entertainment. "Before bedtime Seath Jolly would give me his grey mare, and deliver her in the morning; but we concluded that if Seath died within the year I am to have the mare, or when he dies, and am to have her put to old Shrosbury [a famous horse in the district], and to have that colt, on which I gave him an excellent new hat, and rid with his home through Garstang, and stayed at Hollings [the Hollins Inn] amongst all the tenants."

Next morning, after the evening of enthusiasm, Thomas was still satisfied with the trade he had made of a new hat for a possible colt. He did errands in Garstang and returned to the Hollins to find the tenants keeping a court, "and as great looking at Seath's old hat [which Thomas was no doubt wearing] as if it had been a rare show, but the colt of the grey mare ran in my mind, and I mattered not their staring at the hat." The tenants might have their fun against the master; he could look ahead.

For all his good nature, he was not unlike the old squire we meet in novels who had a temper and could hold a grudge. Once at two in the morning he had left an inn in a great passion. A neighbour woman who was a creditor, and had had some ticklish dealings with him, sent him in token of peace two bottles of brandy and received them back at once. He was equally decisive when he knocked down "great long Jemmy Wilkinson" for his "saweyness [sauciness?]."

We have represented Thomas's circle as given to fellowship and conviviality at inns. Winters were long, the weather was raw, and it would be natural to suppose that there was a great deal of drinking. Yet the reader is not impressed either in Tyldesley's

diary or in that of Nicholas Blundell in the same county at almost the same time, with the intemperance. That is not to minimize the number of alehouses and their facilities, nor to blink the fact that all discussions of business, all arrangements, were conducted over a bottle with someone, usually the man of superior station, treating. But drunkenness is seldom mentioned, perhaps because the drinks were usually light. Thomas writes most frequently of white wine, but he mentions also claret, canary, sherry, sack, cider, brandy and the always popular ale. It is true that he was once given two drams of usquebath, that is, whiskey, but that was a new and unusual liquor. There is no word of port, the gentleman's drink of the late eighteenth century, as if the Methuen Treaty which brought that potent liquid into England had not yet been signed.

Only a few times did Thomas single out anyone as having gone too far. It did seem too far when Edward Fleetwood, the young lord of Rossall Hall, grew so elevated that he bit off his servant's thumb just below the nail. Thomas's disapproval was evident at an inn when a respected yeoman whom he knew well "came in foxed, and talked us away." Nor did he like it when his own tenant was "ill foxed by George Carus' means." Another tenant went from a visit with Thomas to the alehouse and was "thoroughly cut by Sir John Barleycorn."

Thomas never admitted to his diary that he himself was ever foxed or cut by Sir John. Twelve years earlier, however, in writing to a merchant, he had remarked: "I long to come to Liverpool to show how far better I am, for I have left off drinking."

If Thomas liked his pot, he took his part in paying, and it must have been an expensive part. It was a satisfaction to him when he could note down that he had nothing to pay. The best wine, says the proverb, is that a body drinketh of another's cost.

It was in the hunting field that Thomas was at his best. He was

one of the type familiar in the annals of England who rise up to kill and lie down to dream of the field next day, as if kin of the megalithic men who had to seek their food. Even in the last months of his life, when pain was closing in on him, Thomas managed to go hunting occasionally. When he had to abandon a chase, he listened afterwards to the story of it.

On many days Thomas would be out with two or three others coursing hares. "Went a hunting with cos. Butler . . . killed a brace of hares." Then he proceeded to the White Bull with Sany Butler, Gabriel Hesketh, and honest Tom Lucas, but Sany Butler and Gabriel Hesketh devoured all the pies in the inn and left "not one mouthful to us three poor pill garlicks [miserable fellows]." Thomas might go hungry, but he was in high spirits.

Fox hunting was a less formal sport than today and different in method. Thomas and his friends met early in the morning on the slopes of Sullam to the east of Garstang. The hunters ran the fox to earth and then dug him out; if he refused to go to earth, he usually got away. It is possible that there had not yet been developed as tireless a breed of hounds as today.

When the hunts were prearranged, Thomas would get out the evening before to stay near the place of the meet, going to bed perhaps at five o'clock in the afternoon. Then early in the morning the chase began. "Went early to Sullam a fox hunting to meet brothers Dalton and Frost, found two foxes, but could get neither of them into the earth." The rest of the day was spent in seeing acquaintances and drinking with them.

Another time Thomas went to Dimples, a good Catholic house where there would be prayers, and then next morning was off. "As soon as day we went to meet several company a-hunting. We earthed the bitch fox and took a cub before the hounds, alive, after running him two miles; thence to Garstang, spent two shillings pro man and self." Four days later Thomas rose at one in

the morning to meet huntsmen, but when they failed to keep the appointment, he had drinks at a little inn and had them charged to those who had failed him.

Another day they unkennelled a fox in order to pursue him, but lost him presently. Unkennelling a fox in a country full of foxes sounds a curious procedure, but Thomas kept a fox in kennel at Fox Hall, partly no doubt to use on such occasions, partly perhaps in honour of the name of the house.

Not as many deer hunts were recorded. Thomas went one day to meet the hounds who killed a three-year-old, male, fallow deer which they took to the Cock's, and were "very merry over a part of him." Next day there was a wager that no buck would be slain, "but after three hours' good sport we did, and went to eat part of him at Cock's, where brother Frost and I keep company with the yeomen men who had helped us in our sport." Some special delight they gained in eating at once of the venison.

The fox and the deer had a holiday one day when Thomas and his friends hunted and killed an otter. Thomas helped Cuddy Threfall to dress it. "We were a great many good company . . . and all the neighbourhood, and we eat the whole otter. . . . We drank the house dry." Other days Thomas and his cronies went fowling along the low grounds and marshes, where they shot occasional ducks and sea-pies. Fishing too filled in the recesses from hunting, but in angling Thomas did not experience the rare exultation he derived from hunting.

There were many sports not connected with the pursuit of game. Cockfighting was common and Thomas once won nearly thirty shillings on the result. Horse races drew a "great company of the best in the county" to Ormskirk. Two of the good priests ran horses in the races, as indeed did Thomas's son Edward. In one meeting Thomas followed the measuring of the horses and recorded their lengths, and on the following day picked up ten shillings on

the outcome. He was even allowed that special pleasure of being shown around the stables. There were lesser enjoyments. Thomas attended a stage play and took his wife to a puppet show. Bowling he mentions rather often and card-playing occasionally. He once arranged for dancing lessons, but it is not evident that he put them to much use.

If these Lancashire gentry had a lot to do with one another and with the lesser men of the county it was partly because they were a friendly breed who enjoyed their fellow beings in a way gentlemen have since forgotten how to do, and are the poorer thereby. It was also, however, because they were dependent upon one another for entertainment. They were off in a northwest corner of the island, at least a week in the saddle from London; in their interests they were farther away than that. Thomas wrote of two or three events on the continent—he had probably gone to a Catholic school in France—but never of happenings in London, save the death of Queen Anne, which concerned him as a Jacobite in a special way. London had this interest for him, that certain incomes from his estate had to be sent there, but the London of the court, of parliament, and of city companies did not impinge upon his life.

Lancashire was a world large enough for him and his friends. It was true that the Leyburnes had been on a visit to Bath, but that was unusual. When an acquaintance was preparing for a journey to London, Thomas went to call on him and found others there who had come to say good-bye to one going on a far journey. One day when Thomas was ill a jockey brought round a "foreigner" to see him, that is, no doubt, a man from a shire not contiguous to Lancashire.

Only occasionally does Thomas mention his wife, and what he tells us gives us little clue as to her. She may have been a woman of character and personality for all we know. She remains



an indistinct figure, as much in the background of her husband's life as in the background of his diary. Yet at that she was more important, if the brief entries are to be trusted, than most of the women of a century earlier.

He records the sums of money he turned over to her for household expenses, which were not enough to encourage extravagance. Since his financial affairs were no secret to his friends, his wife must have known about them. There is no indication that she ever complained of anything; if she had, he would have been likely to record it. Nor did he say anything about her by way of complaint; but then, he was equally sparing of praise and of those terms of endearment which he lavished on his friends.

It was when he was ill that she proved useful, performing the operation of bleeding him. When she fell ill, his solicitude was all that could have been expected. He stayed at home, obviously worried, and not until she was better did he venture off for a day's hunting. When she was worse again he took a step that was justified at that time only if the situation was serious; he sent for the physician, his good friend Dr. Worthington, who was able to bring her round.

She was allowed some part in Thomas's social life. The festivities in honour of the Duchess of Hamilton included her. Now and then she went with him to make calls and received his guests when they descended upon the house. It appears that if there were guests to be taken to the alehouse, she accompanied him there. She had some social existence apart from him, went to see other women and received visits from them. A good deal of her time was taken up with her four step-daughters and two daughters. Twice at least there was dancing at the house in the evening, apparently impromptu, possibly for the daughters, but more probably because Mrs. Tyldesley was herself fond of it. In a day when parents

arranged marriages for their daughters, it was unnecessary to provide amusement for them.

Women in general were more in the diary than in earlier diaries. A gentleman came riding up "with lady" much more often. Thomas talked of "she cousin" this and "cousin she" that. He liked more than one of his female cousins and would have liked his sisters well enough if he had not had financial difficulties with them. When he was ill, and in and out of bed, many women came to see his sisters, and he professed himself "sick with their chattle"; but there is evidence enough that when he was himself their chattle was not unwelcome. The wives of his friends were not excluded from his interest. In a letter he sent his respects to his cousin and "his good fireside," that is, his wife, a hint as to his notion of the place of women.

The domestic arrangements of the Tyldesley household were modest. Pictures and descriptions of the Lodge indicate that it was not larger than a fair-sized vicarage, let us say because we know it, that of parson Woodforde, at the end of the eighteenth century. As in the parson's home, there were about three male servants and two female servants, with other help called in at special times.

The servants seem to have been well treated. They were allowed to attend the conjuror's performance the second evening after the Tyldesley family had been there, and Thomas stayed up until two in the morning for their return. Thomas was annoyed at his servant, Lawrence, for getting drunk, and discharged him with part of his wages, but was easily persuaded to become "friends" again, "so that now there is due to him just three pounds," that is, about a year's wages. But when Lawrence died, Thomas paid Dr. Worthington ten shillings for his medical attention, as much as he had paid in the case of his own illness.

Thomas was equally considerate of the servants of his friends.

When a neighbour sent a man on an errand to Myerscough Lodge, Thomas was likely to put him up for the night, and sometimes to spend a shilling upon him at the inn. On his visits to the houses of his friends, Thomas left vails or tips that were almost equal to those of today in actual money, and therefore worth much more. He was unlike the gentleman that Sir Thomas Overbury characterized who would "go ten miles out of his way to a cousin's house of his to save charges; and rewards the servants by taking them by the hand when he departs."

The fact is that the servants in that time, as in an earlier, were better off in many ways than today. They were part of a world not yet wholly removed from that of their masters, and there is nothing surprising in that; they were in many cases the sons of tenants with whom the squire was on good terms.

The Tyldesley household must have lived in large measure on purchases from the outside. A century earlier such a policy was deemed imprudent. "Live not in the country without corn and cattle about thee," wrote a father to his son about the year 1600, "for he that must present his hand to his purse for every expense of the household may be likened to him that keeps water in a sieve." That comment still had truth in it, though people were fast getting away from living of their own.

The Tyldesleys were too modern. They went outside for much of their supplies. Thomas was always handing his wife or the servants money to buy wheat and meal, eggs, butter, fish, salmon, beef, mutton, chicken, carrots, pease and potatoes. He records the purchase of fruit and mentions raspberries, strawberries and black cherries. Malt, sugar and other commodities for making beer were bought. At the end of the eighteenth century parson Woodforde brewed his own beer, but Thomas speaks of bringing in a maltster. One might expect that the provisions not grown on the estate would have been purchased from neighbouring farmers, but most

of them seem to have come from shops. Thomas purchased beef, mutton, wheat and fruit from a man who apparently kept at once an alehouse and a general shop. One of the large items of expense at Myerscough was for coal; we hear little of wood. But Thomas did go to a good deal of trouble to secure peat, supervising the cutting of it and bringing cartloads of it to sea, and then by boat to a landing place nearest his house.

It might be supposed that a man so interested in bringing home peat would have been active in farm work. But aside from haying there is no mention of agricultural effort. From other diaries it would appear that it was the custom of gentlemen to take part in the haying, perhaps because a lot of labour was needed over a short time. Haying began in Lancashire about the first of August.

"It fell about the Lammas tide  
When the murmen win their hay,"

says the ballad of Otterburn. From the first of August until the twelfth Thomas was out in the fields working intermittently with his men, once till eight-thirty in the evening. From early spring on he spent time in the vegetable garden, especially in the late afternoon. We catch him often putting out cauliflower plants, savoy cabbages and "pottetow sets."

His illness runs almost from the beginning of the diary to the end. In September, 1712, he was taking manna, a laxative of that time. By November of that year he was so lame that he had to send in to Preston for tobacco and oil of turpentine. On many days he found himself housebound and suffering. The application of warm cabbage leaves failed to relieve him, and he had to have fourteen ounces of blood taken from his arm. All the next winter he was in pain, the chemist would come, and Thomas would take cream of tartar and manna, but neither of them seemed to do him much good. It did cheer him that his priestly friends came and sat whole

days with him, and that one tenant after another dropped in to comfort him. In May, 1713, Thomas mentioned a prescription of Dr. Worthington's, who had apparently not been summoned until at about that time.

With the summer Thomas grew better. He gave Dr. Worthington twenty shillings, "which he, as always, took very thankful, though too little per half." Once after his wife's illness he had offered the physician thirty shillings, and that good man had refused to accept more than twenty. On his birthday Thomas wrote down a prayer: "Delivering me from two angry fits of the gout, a fever for five weeks, and a fever fit of the gravel for twelve or fourteen days, may his Glorious and Blessed Name ever be sanctified by me, mine and all who hereafter shall read this."

During one of his periods of temporary recovery, he went through Lancaster, where he ran into his old friend, Frost, "who was with much pain just comen to town in Mrs. Edmonson's calash, to be under the cure of Dr. M[oore], but he told me it was too late." Frost's prediction proved true, and Thomas had to turn back from one of his excursions, but was unable to arrive in time for the burial of his friend. The death of one's associates, indeed the prospect of one's own death, was accepted more casually, I am inclined to believe, than today.

It was at a meeting with his cronies that Thomas learned the news most significant to his circle. "Went about twelve to meet Ned Winckley, . . . Gabriel Hesketh, Henry Whittingham, and Esquire Haddock, who brought the news that Queen Anne died Sunday morning." What a piece of news that was to men who hoped for the restoration of the Stuarts. Thomas continued: "We spent two shillings each, being invited to a pig feast." There was no further reference to the event that concerned him and all his Jacobite friends, no indication that Lancashire was awaiting the day for rebellion.

A few months later a small army made up of Scots and north-country gentlemen and their retainers marched south, hoping to rouse the country for James III and relying upon support from Lancashire. Vain faith and courage vain. When they reached Lancaster and Preston, it was already evident that the county was staying aloof; the leaders looked grim, and the soldiers were falling away. Once more the Stuart cause was to be lost.

Nevertheless some good Catholic gentlemen, Gabriel Hesketh, dear true Ned Winckley, Richard Butler, Dick Shuttleworth, brother Dalton, Cousin Wadsworth, and Thomas's own son Edward, attached themselves to the falling cause.

They were brave to no purpose. The Jacobite rebellion was soon suppressed, and Thomas's friends went to the block or lost their property. His son managed to escape punishment by virtue of a jury that would not convict.

Thomas had died in the January before the rebellion broke out. Three of his daughters became nuns, one of them indeed an abbess, and so carried on the family tradition of loyalty to their church.

It would have been poetic if Thomas's life could have ended in the rebellion. His days had been a kind of continuous failure for himself and his line. He had watched the Tyldesley lands become the prey of creditors and he must have foreseen that the Tyldesley name was soon to go the way that gentle families go in time. Had he lived to fight for him he deemed his rightful King, as his grandfather had done, had he been fortunate enough to lose his head on the block, he might have died more proudly. He might even have a kind of immortality in the balladry of Lancashire.

## Alice Thornton

**A**LICE WANDESFORD, who was to become Alice Thornton, was born in a small Yorkshire country house in the vale of York, only twenty-three years after the death of the Great Queen. It was a house and an environment where Elizabethan traditions and manners still lingered. Spending much of her girlhood in Ireland, she returned to England in time to face the troubles of the Civil Wars and the rule of the puritans. She was herself sacrificed to those unhappy times. She was as typical an example of the seventeenth-century Englishwoman as any whose record we have. Her autobiography was an account of the Almighty's favours to her, both spiritual and temporal, and more especially a description of her deliverances from drowning, shipwreck, the loss of sight and the malice of Satan. Over her helpless head the forces of God and the devil waged their battle. Through eighty-one years of the struggle she lived, down into the middle of the reign of Queen Anne, and died praying that she might be received into "those heavenly habitations where the souls of them that sleep in the Lord Jesus enjoy perpetual rest and felicity." Rest and felicity she never enjoyed in this world.

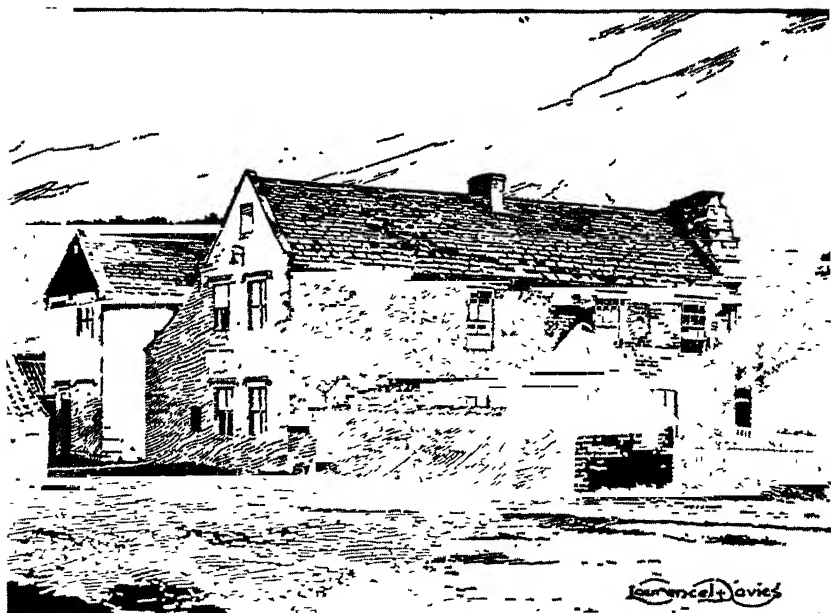
Yet Providence meant well by Alice Wandesford. If to be born of excellent, pious and well-to-do parents, and to be reared with the advantages that accrue therefrom, be part of God's scheme for his children, Alice had no cause to complain. The Wandesfords had been squires of Kirklington near Thirsk since the fifteenth century; generations of them were lying in heavy tombs along the south wall of the church. It was not a great family, but one with

an estate and position in the county. True there had been signs that the Wandesford stock was wearing a little thin, and the family income was dwindling. But with Christopher, the father of Alice, the family fortunes mended. He was the soul of piety, virtue, and good sense. He proved his piety by his ability at an early age to recite the psalms and the lessons of the day at his mother's knee; his virtue by his refusal as an undergraduate to swim in company, "not enduring from delicacy to be seen naked even by his own sex"; his common sense by his marriage to a young woman who possessed health, intelligence and two thousand pounds.

By the time that Alice, the fifth child, was born in 1626, her father had succeeded in making the manor of Kirklington a model estate. He had the wood from his own trees cut down and made into furniture by a cabinet-maker who was also a tenant; he had improved his lands by ploughing and pasturage, and he had picked up additional acres. A conscientious landlord, he allotted weekly portions of corn or money to the needy on his property, provided a schoolmaster for the children of the tenants, and even sent exceptional boys to the university. He had that philosophy not uncommon among squires that the peace of rural life was to be sought above all; he believed the happiest condition of life to be "under the degree of a justice of peace and above the quality of a high constable." He would, he believed afterwards, have been satisfied with the honours that come to a useful squire. Nevertheless he did go to the House of Commons as member for Aldborough and played some little part in the stormy deliberations of the sixteen-twenties.

But the dominant figure of Alice's youth was of course her mother. The image of Mrs. Wandesford runs through Alice's story as her conception of the perfect character. Her mother's will was law to her; her greatest comfort the fact that she was never in her life disobedient. Her prayer was that she might possess those





ALICE THORNTON'S HOUSE AT EAST NEWTON, WAS HELMSLEY



graces and virtues that God had bestowed upon her mother. Mrs. Wandesford was the gracious dispenser of alms, the lady bountiful of the village; husband, children and servants looked to her for benevolent guidance. Descended from London tradesmen of the kind that became wealthy Lord Mayors, Mrs. Wandesford had a nice sense of the importance of the station in life to which God had called her. Her husband's mainstay from the day of her marriage, she took over the rehabilitation of Kirklington and proceeded to improve his estate through her prudent management of his household. In God she put her confidence, and served Him from her youth, but she saw no harm in placing a proper reliance on such matters as settlements, deeds of gift, and duly attested wills. Moreover she was endowed with an "excellent temper in soul and body, neither of them wanting those due ornaments which might make her lovely in the eyes of God and man."

Alice had as good parents as she could ask, and the Lord had given her more, a sound vigorous body, straight limbs, and a reasonable understanding. That she could survive the many misfortunes, accidents, and illnesses of childhood, which she records in detail, was due of course to Providential oversight, but did testify to her good constitution. Of children she wrote wistfully: "Innocency and harmlessness is not able to defend them from injurious dealings from evil persons, neglects and brutishness of nurses . . . added to the dreadful malice of Satan."

If Satan was active, God was not idle. In after years Alice placed her first awareness of His miraculous power at the tender age of five, which suggests a precocity seldom known outside of memoirs.

In 1632 when she was six years old, the scene changed. Alice's father translated his family from the Yorkshire seat to a very different and far-away habitation. It came about through the interposition of a distant cousin, Sir Thomas Wentworth. Wentworth was a man of determination and drive, who knew what

ought to be done and usually saw the way to do it. He was persuaded to join the government of Charles I, and found there what he had not found in the House of Commons, the chance to gratify his impulse for action. With him into the good graces of Whitehall he carried his fellow member from Yorkshire, Wandesford, one of the few men he trusted, a man who was ready to follow his cousin's path wherever it led.

It led to Ireland, where Wentworth as Lord Deputy, with Wandesford as his Master of the Rolls, proceeded to set up a government, which in the eyes of the "wild Irish" was little short of a reign of terror, but which to Alice was "wise and prudential . . . to the preservation of his Majesty's crown and dignities."

Alice's education was carried on in Dublin much as at Kirklington. She was taught the essentials her mother had learned before her. She was trained in those pious, holy and religious instructions, examples and admonitions which her parents deemed necessary for the salvation of her soul. To Alice, as to her parents, the Church of England was that "excellent, pure, and glorious church then established, [which] for soundness in faith and doctrine, none could parallel since the Apostles' time." But her account of the religious life of the family must dispel any illusion that to be Church of England, as opposed to the Nonconformists, meant that religion was to be taken any more lightly. The whole family was called to prayers by a little bell at six in the morning, at ten in the forenoon, and again at nine at night.

But mindful as always that the claims of this world, though subordinate, could not be ignored, Mrs. Wandesford saw to it that Alice learned what was proper for a young lady of quality and her "father's daughter." She was taught French, singing, dancing, and playing on the lute and the theorbo. She had to know how to work silks, to make sweetmeats and "other suitable huswifery." In short she had to be made ready to assume those re-

sponsibilities that, God willing, a suitable marriage would provide.

In 1640 Strafford was called back to London by Charles I, and Wandesford became Lord Deputy of Ireland. The task of carrying on in Ireland without Strafford proved too much; he was troubled constantly with an uneasy sense of evil days ahead. When the English Commons charged Strafford with treason and committed him to the Tower, it was a blow to the Lord Deputy in Dublin. Already weakened by overwork and worry, Wandesford fell a victim to one of those fevers which in the seventeenth century were undistinguished by name. His blood was said to be corrupted. Cut pigeons were laid at his feet, an old remedy based upon the theory that the animal's vitality might be transmitted to the patient. Happily the course of the disease made it possible for Wandesford to attend to the proper preliminaries of dying—a full confession of faith made in the presence of people of quality, instructions to his oldest son George about the care of Mrs. Wandesford, farewells to everyone and, not least important, the final ratification of his will. Not only were the children not excluded from the deathbed scene, but they were urged to be present, that they might be edified by the spectacle of a Christian leave-taking. The entertainment, Alice wrote, was full of divine meditations, ejaculations, prayers and praises. Her father summoned Alice to his bedside, fixed her with his gaze, and warned her with a deep groan: "Ah, poor child, what must thou see and thine eyes behold!"

Having attended to every detail in exemplary fashion, Wandesford yielded up his soul and was buried in Christ Church, Dublin. It was comfort to Alice that this was the chief church, and that the corpse was carried in a stately manner, becoming to the dignity of the Lord Deputy.

Wandesford was fortunate in not living to see what Alice comprehensively describes as the "treasons, treacheries, bloodsheds,

burnings, famines, desolations, and destructions," which fell on the holy and pious King, the excellent and glorious church, and the Wandesford family. From the time of her father's dissolution, Alice had few days without worry, and she was not in that respect different from many others.

She had been brought up to accept the existing social and religious order, she had been trained to expect a suitable position in it, and she was confronted suddenly with the spectacle of that order toppling about her. From childhood she had been taught to revere the Church of England, and that church she saw now encompassed with enemies. She had been taught to honour his blessed Majesty, Charles I, as the support of the Church, and Charles was beheaded. She had been taught that a proper marriage suitable to her estate and station would be forthcoming, and the rest of the story will show how that hope was fulfilled. The discrepancy between the world as it had become and the world as it ought to have been, induced in her a mental and spiritual confusion and a despondency from which she never really emerged. Vestiges of her adolescent disappointment remain in her account until the end.

So far as we can tell Alice's mother made every effort to spare her disillusionment and tried to carry out her plans for the children; she accepted calamities as they came and maintained that calm demeanour suitable to the widow of Christopher Wandesford. She intended on her husband's death, had the wars not occurred, to settle at Hipswell in Yorkshire, her own jointure, educate and establish her sons, see to an excellent marriage for Alice, and conduct her life as she had in the early days of her marriage. To get herself, her children, her servants and her household transferred to Hipswell took two years. The family escaped only by the greatest luck massacre in the Irish Rebellion, and when they reached Chester the wars there were "falling out hot at the time."

But by one device and another and by the help of friends she was able to pass with her family between various bodies of warring troops to Hipswell.

Here Alice was to remain until her mother's death sixteen years later. Hipswell had come into the Wandesford family from a member of the Fulthorpe family. It is today a roughly rectangular house with crenelated roofs and a Tudor chimney; two bay windows on the south bear the Fulthorpe arms, and over the front door are the initials "C. W." Here Mrs. Wandesford tried to establish herself in the old way and to conduct her household as if rebellion were non-existent.

But one of the troublesome reminders of the new régime was the continual presence in the house of either Scottish or parliamentary soldiers. Not only did Mrs. Wandesford have to provide them with food and shelter, but she had to pay £25 a month for them to boot. The officers she refused to entertain, and Alice was one of the reasons. Two of the officers made offers for her hand; Captain Innis would advance £4,000, and Jeremy Smithson £200 a year. It may have been her personal charms that attracted them, but it is hard not to suspect that they regarded her as a possible heiress. When Smithson found that he could not marry her he tried to steal her away, but Alice was saved by a servant of his whom she had befriended.

As the cause of the King declined, the position of the Wandesford family became more serious. Alice's brother, George, the heir to the Wandesford estates, ought to have had no trouble, for his mother was more than prudent about his conduct. There was no such pressure in that time as today for a man to enlist in war. George knew that it would be folly to involve himself and his family in ruin, and he declined to engage in any fighting "when no good could possibly be done by his service to the King, otherwise than by our prayers and tears for him."

Prayers and tears were all that the Wandesford family had to offer their King, but their caution did not save them. The battle came to them. On the day of the battle of Marston Moor, as Alice tells the story, her brother, George, was seen near the battle and pursued as an enemy. It was in consequence easy for those who had an eye on his estates to assert that he had been a participant in the fray on the royal side. His estates were seized, he was proclaimed a traitor to parliament, and was forced to flee up the dales to save his life.

Deliverance was, however, in sight, although it took an odd form. Mrs. Wandesford alarmed about the estate, applied herself to her husband's brother, William Wandesford. He in turn bethought himself of securing the help of one Richard Darley, a leading spirit in the parliamentary committee then ruling at York. It happened that Darley was connected with the family by marriage and "pretended a kindness for the family." But in Yorkshire even kinsmen were not prone to do something for nothing. Darley inquired carefully into the standing of his relatives. As soon as he heard that Alice was likely to have a considerable fortune and, as she modestly put it, "other desirable perquisites in a good match," he realized that he could be of service. There was no doubt about her desirability; indeed a noble lord was later to characterize her as fit to be the wife of a duke. Darley had a relative, a William Thornton, who had a good estate and who might make a desirable husband for Alice. William Wandesford saw the point at once; he promised his utmost assistance, and thus a bargain was struck between them.

It was an excellent arrangement from every point of view, save that of the person most involved. William Wandesford presented the case to Alice's mother as the solution of her difficulties, pointing out pleasantly that if by chance Mrs. Wandesford did not like it, the sequestration of the Wandesford estates would proceed.



Richard Darley set forth the situation to William Thornton, who knew better than anyone else how little he had to lose. There was nothing left to do but secure Alice's consent.

The persuasion to a marriage "with a sword in one hand and a compliment in another" was not to Alice's liking but she trusted her mother's judgment. Yet she wished to have a talk with Mr. Thornton, the proposed husband. To him she explained that to bear children who would be brought up in the "rigid opinion of the Presbyterians" was something to which she could not reconcile herself; she asked him to forbear further suit.

Thornton's answer was so conciliatory that it may have disappointed her. He was satisfied with her opinions and religion and all else about her, "being much above his hopes, desert or expectation." He went on to assure her that he was himself in favour of moderated episcopacy and of a kingly government, and to promise that any children they should beget would be brought up in her faith. That assurance comforted Alice who was "less concerned for riches or the splendour of this world" than for her religion.

Not that she was indifferent to the splendour of this world; she did not give that up lightly. But if she had to yield that, she consoled herself with remembering the "decay of religion" among the gentry. She had refused one young man because he was "debauched," and she knew that many young gentlemen went through a "sad course of life." She had no wish for a husband from among such men.

Indeed she had no desire to marry at that time. But to benefit her family and in particular her beloved brother, and to help out her mother, who had been pushed into the compromise, she gave consent.

Darley carried out his part of the bargain. George was permitted to come out of hiding, and the Wandesford family was

about to enjoy the benefit of the daughter's sacrifice, when George was drowned in crossing the river Swale.

This was almost more than Alice could bear. Even in long retrospect it moved her. Her account of her premonitions and of her parting with her brother becomes prose that, in its rhythm and poignancy, is almost comparable to Clarendon's narrative of the death of Falkland. Alice had enough to endure before, but it was the climax of misfortunes to lose the "main pillar."

The high note of remembered emotion is soon over. It was an increasing comfort to Alice that whatever else was taken from her, she retained her capacity for suffering.

George was gone, but the wedding contract remained. Now Mrs. Wandesford and Mr. Thornton came to grips. Mr. Thornton would hardly have been a foe worthy of her ability, but he was backed by a group of relatives while she had to do battle single-handed. As each side produced its assets it became clear that Mr. Thornton had even less to offer than Mrs. Wandesford had been led to expect. His family was small gentry of a kind rather common in Yorkshire at that time, who had neither much wealth nor breeding. It was a bad bargain for the Wandesford family but there seemed little to do but to make the best of it.

Alice and Mr. Thornton were married at Hipswell in December, 1651, with only a few relatives and servants present. There was no occasion for that display in which Alice was wont to find satisfaction. It was the end of her dream of an alliance with a man of family and fortune, who should place her in a setting worthy of her background. True the Yorkshire background, while good enough, was not one to assure great alliances, but her father had been Lord Deputy of Ireland, and that was not to be forgotten. It was a step or even two down to marry into the Thorntons, but like other disappointed people, she put her hope in the next genera-

tion. She might have children who would be instruments to the "raising up of my husband's family."

On her wedding day she fell violently ill with a pain in her head and stomach which lasted for eight hours. She thought perhaps the fact that she had washed her feet at that time of year explained her illness. In another notebook she betrayed her agony of spirit; "I do confess that I was very desirous to have then [during the illness] delivered up my miserable life into the hands of my merciful Redeemer."

From the wedding day on Alice and her mother displayed a fine loyalty. It is too evident that Mr. Thornton was a weak dyspeptic, with a gift for getting into financial difficulties and a stubbornness that resented advice from any woman. But Alice showed nobility in her forbearance of him, patience with his defects, and generosity in minimizing the difficulties in which his gullibility eventually drew her. Her magnanimity was the more remarkable, since he was not her choice at all, and she was motivated by no desire to justify her own judgment. She accepted him as part of her heaven-sent lot.

Her mother was no less admirable. It was no time at all before Mrs. Wandesford realized that Mr. Thornton, if allowed to follow his own will, would be in a fair way to lose not only what he had, but Alice's fortune as well. As soon as she learned that he could not be deterred by expostulations, she resolved privately to take all necessary legal steps to secure what she could for Alice. Meanwhile she allowed none of her misgivings to interfere with her relationship to her son-in-law; she treated him with every kindness and courtesy. By the terms of the agreement she was bound to provide for the Thorntons for three years, but the time passed and they continued to live under her roof. Of her mother's hospitality Alice wrote: "She had all manner of charges, expenses, and household affairs, in sicknesses, births, christenings, and burials

. . . of nurses, men-servants, and maids, and our friends' entertainments."

However he might fail in other respects, in the matter of begetting a family, Mr. Thornton was beyond reproach. In the seventeen years of her married life, Alice bore him nine children, three of whom lived to maturity. There were few gentlewomen in that time, if they lived through it, who bore their lords less children, and few families where a larger percentage of the children survived. Alice's own sister, Katharine, Lady Danby, had sixteen children (including six still-born) and died at the age of thirty, telling her sister that she received her change with much satisfaction. Alice remembered her sister's satisfaction in dying, but she accepted as part of her dispensation the months of ill health that preceded the bearing of offspring, the ordeals themselves, and the tragic failure of babies to survive the first few weeks of life. Alice's first child died half an hour after its birth. The second and fourth daughters, Alice and Katharine, lived to grow up, but the third died after eighteen months. Her fifth child, born in the sixth year of her marriage, a boy, died before a clergyman could be brought to baptize him.

By this time Alice's health was beginning to show the effects of her efforts on her husband's behalf. The physician feared that she was deeply gone in a consumption, and that if she did live she would be barren. He sent her off to Scarborough, on the east Yorkshire coast, where she drank the waters with such excellent results that after she returned home she found herself well again and hopeful of bearing her husband a son.

Towards the end of 1659 it became evident that Mrs. Wandesford was not to be long with them, nor live to see the hopes of a grandson fulfilled. Under her rule Hipswell had prospered, her tenants had thriven, and the poor had been relieved. Such "good huswifery" she had displayed that she did not live in a penurious

manner but "in a noble, handsome manner." She had attended to the proper drawing of her will, so that she was free to spend the last weeks in the customary prayers, meditations and exhortations. Her daughter's visible distress at her sufferings moved her and she reminded Alice that the way to heaven was by the gates of hell. Having said all that was in her mind, she "sweetly fell asleep."

She had asked for a simple funeral, but it was unthinkable to Alice that her mother should not be buried with "as much handsomeness as those times would afford." By lords and knights and kindred of quality, and finally by tenants, the body was brought to Catterick church.

No sooner was it laid in its grave than the family wrangles began. Christopher, the heir since the death of George, appeared from London to claim the house and lands and as much else as he could. From this time he was unfriendly to Alice. He moved at once to put Alice, now far gone with child, and her husband out of Hipswell. They went for the time being to Oswaldskirk, near the house they were building.

In the spring of 1660 Alice's child was born, and it was indeed a boy. For one week they all rejoiced and then, lest she be too transported by this happiness, she was chastened again. "Whether through cold upon his dressing then, or what else was the cause the Lord knoweth," the baby died after fourteen days, to the grief of his mother and to the distraction of his father.

The spring of 1660 brought one blessing, however, the restoration of the Stuarts. Now indeed the hearts and tongues of all the faithful were full of joy and gratitude, and of Alice as much as any. The maids of St. Nicholas, the house in which Mrs. Thornton was staying with her aunt Norton, went off to Richmond where there was shooting of guns, various kinds of sports and "country expressions of joy."

To Alice the Restoration brought the privilege of partaking

again of the sacraments of the Church. While staying at Oswaldskirk, she had listened to the preaching of her brother-in-law, Mr. Denton, a "very excellent and wise man." She had enjoyed much comfort in his ministry and he had helped her, as her husband had not, in the building of the house at East Newton. But since he was "only ordained by the presbytery ordination" she had never adventured to receive the sacrament from him. When now a proper clergyman of the Church of England came to Stonegrave, she was able to take again the "chief food" of her soul.

There was little else that the Restoration brought her. The change of spirit that revived London, the return of gay clothes and the reopening of the theatre scarcely affected the North Riding. And no restoration of the monarch could bring back to Alice those intangible values that she had lost with the wars, her youthful faith in institutions, her sense of security, and her hope for a better future in this world.

That better future in this world was to prove an illusion. Indeed almost at once there were racking experiences that she was never to forget.

The first was with her God. In crises she had always been able to feel at once in the motions of her own spirit His answer to her appeal or inquiry. His presence near her was her support in many tribulations. In this instance it was tribulation that took away her support. As a result of a cold caught in church she became so ill that she fancied herself to be dying. That was no new ordeal nor one that terrified her. But this time she was so worn out in body that she suffered suddenly from a sense of "spiritual desertion," believing herself lost by reason of sin, and that "now it was too late to hope."

Poor Alice! She had no one to whom she could open her thoughts, in this case not even her God. The terror of her spiritual agony—a type of agony not unknown in that time—we cannot

begin to realize. With the return, however, of physical strength, Alice regained her sense of communion with God.

She had hardly recovered from this worst ordeal of her life when she had a fearful experience with her husband. His "melancholic humour" she had long recognized and, by the use of leeches and a gentle course of physic spring and autumn, had endeavoured to rouse in him a cheerful frame of mind. But there was a deeper instability in him. He fell into a "high passion" about some money he owed her estate, and Alice's tears only made him worse. He seems to have pulled out a pocket knife and to have threatened to kill himself. Alice took hold of him and entreated him to "put away that evil design." What would become of his poor soul, she asked, and of the child within her. She would, she told him, be questioned for his act, and might suffer, since there were no witnesses. Meanwhile she prayed him to take the goods.

Mr. Thornton, having gained what he wished, grew less passionate. "But this unhappy accident," wrote Alice, "wrought so infinitely with grief upon my heart that I fancied I saw the very blood upon his pen knife, and had very near gone to make me miscarry at that instant." When her child was born she noted a strange mark of sprinkles of blood just upon his heart and believed that her God had so set his mark that His mercy might not be forgotten.

It was fortunate for Mrs. Thornton during these experiences at Oswaldskirk that she had to keep her mind upon the building of their new house, "Mr. Thornton not giving himself to take pleasure or trouble in anything of that nature." Alice brought to the house, when it was finished, her mother's furniture and stocked the farm with cattle, sheep and horses. The house was not a great place, but Alice had seen to it that it was comfortable, with deep fireplaces, large windows and wainscotted rooms of dignity and character. It was no doubt due to her that there were,

throughout the house, extra cupboards, window seats, retiring rooms, etc. She was preparing to establish herself as her mother had done, and to make a place for herself in the new neighbourhood.

To do that she needed two things with which she was not provided, a strong, dependable man for a husband, and financial security. She had to have money, not for display, but for the proper development of the farm, the care of tenantry, and the proper bestowal of those ample charities that were the hallmark of gentility. But Mr. Thornton was becoming more and more involved in debt. His creditors began to sue; he was summoned to London to settle with them, which meant giving up more of Alice's money; and to her horror she was confronted with bailiffs—she had dreamed of their arrival—who came prepared to seize on her household goods if cash were not forthcoming.

She was able to find the money to satisfy the bailiffs, but was utterly humiliated. What would the neighbours think? They had very properly called on her, "all the best of the gentry and neighbourhood," in one day as many as fifty or sixty.

That autumn the heir was born. Alice lay in bed "while all the company was got together to view that goodly child and admire him, so large and big, newly born, and all so fond of him being a son."

But presently she developed an exceeding weakness, that is, haemorrhages. Her family took their farewell of her, and she lay for hours speechless, when Lady York came to her bedside and said: "My dear cousin, you that helps everyone to save them, cannot you tell what would do you good in this extremity?"

Alice murmured into Lady York's ear: "Go into closet, right hand shelf, box, powder, syrup of cloves, give me." And by divine providence, the box and powder were there.

Two more children were born to her, and each with danger.



When she was expecting her eighth she made ready for death. "I was the most concerned for my poor children, who might per-adventure want some helps from their weak mother, and having no relation or friend of my own, that might take care of them, if their father should see cause to marry again, according as I had been told that it would be necessary for him for his health." With that instinct for looking ahead which was natural to her, she committed the care of her son to her uncle, Lord Frecheville, of her daughter Alice to her aunt, Norton, and of her daughter Katharine to her niece, Mrs. Best. In thinking of her children, she quietly left her husband out of account.

The planning proved unnecessary. Her eighth child, Joyce, arrived only "after an exceeding sharp and perilous time" and lived only four months.

When in 1667 Alice found that she was again pregnant, she wrote: "If it had been good in the eyes of my God, I should much rather . . . not to have been in this condition." Her fears were not unjustified. Her own description of the birth of the child was left out of the printed edition of her journal. "I was," she wrote, "never in all my life nearer death by forcing the child so violently by the midwife, in so much as the neighbours did fear I should be divided from waist downwards and the rest of all my body, which caused me inexpressible torment."

That torment she was not to go through again, for in less than a year Mr. Thornton was dead, at the age of forty-four. He had been ailing for years and was finally affected by the "cold palsy" and died while on a visit to his sister in Malton. Alice wished that she might have been taken instead, being "weary of the world and myself." As she looked back upon him, he seemed to her a "dear and tenderly-loving husband." How much she had forgotten!

His financial affairs proved to be even in more of a muddle than

Alice had feared. His debts made necessary a sale of his household goods and Alice was told that whatever belonged to her would be appraised with the other goods. But the spirit of Alice's mother, Mrs. Wandesford, proved as strong in death as in life. Timidly Alice produced her mother's writings, and it turned out that the goods had been placed in trust for the daughter and were not liable for the payment of debts. Alice's maid, Daphne Lightfoot, who had been in her service since childhood, led the discomfited appraisers around the house, showing them Mrs. Wandesford's mark on everything that had been hers, beds, furniture, pewter, and brasses.

For thirty-eight more years, from her widowhood till her death in 1706, Alice lived at East Newton. The poverty with which she was to struggle to the end of her life was hard to bear. The little that her husband had left her grew less and was swallowed up by the pressing claims of her brother, Christopher, who was another of her husband's creditors. It was, however, consolation to Alice that she had been in no way to blame, having never conformed herself "to the modes or quirks of new fashions and affected novelities, either in meat, drink, apparel, or the gaieties of the world."

The marriage of her elder daughter, in her fifteenth year, to Mr. Comber solved one problem. Mrs. Thornton's relations to that scholarly young clergyman proved one of the most consoling and yet disturbing factors in her life. As a young man, Comber had come, on Thornton's invitation, to live at East Newton, and had proved invaluable, conducting divine service, teaching the children, reading to Mr. Thornton, and lending Alice the comfort of his constant advice and sympathy. But the story went about that Alice's feeling for the young parson was more than friendly. A kinswoman of hers, Mrs. Danby, whom she had sheltered for years, spread the gossip, and people, whether they believed it or not, listened to it. The scandal caused Alice anguish; no one was

ever more sensitive to the approval of her community. It is to be said for Mr. Thornton that he never gave the stories the least credit, and Alice's friends implored her not to impair her health by grieving, since her innocence was accepted by all worthy persons. The gossip had this good effect for historians, that Alice was impelled to write the story of her life as a kind of justification.

The object of Mr. Comber's affections was little Alice, and a marriage arrangement had been made even before Thornton died. Two months after his death, the couple were married secretly in the scarlet room at East Newton, and the following spring the marriage announced, and the relatives and neighbours invited to as handsome a supper as Alice could afford. At night there were the "usual solemnities of marriage, of getting the bride to bed, with a great deal of decency and modesty of all parties was this solemnity performed."

Mr. Comber turned out to be a support and strength to his mother-in-law; she delighted in his piety, cherished his opinions, and depended upon him in business matters. The marriage had advantages for him too. Mrs. Thornton's relatives, Lord Frecheville and others, had influence with the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and Mr. Comber's advancement in the church, while due partly to his own abilities and his writings, was assisted by his new relatives.

If Alice had a son-in-law that suited her, she still clung to the hope of her son's success, the son whom she had dedicated at birth to the Lord's service. But Robin proved a weak character, drifting from Cambridge to Oxford and from one Oxford college to another, and acquiring debts wherever he was. On leaving Oxford he had been reluctant to enter the service to which his mother had dedicated him, but eventually took orders, perhaps because he had to make a living. Through the influence of Mr. Comber, who was never careless of the interest of his relatives, Robin gained one small post after another, finally accepting a living at Bolden,

near his brother-in-law, who had become the Dean of Durham. He was about to make a marriage with a woman who had three thousand pounds, an alliance that had been schemed for him by Dean Comber, when he caught a cold during a church service and died suddenly. And so Alice's efforts to provide a Thornton male to carry on the name had come to nothing.

For the last years of Alice's life we have nothing but one letter (still in manuscript) and the incidental allusions to her in her son-in-law's diary. Mr. Comber died in 1691, and Mrs. Comber returned to live with her mother. Alice was perhaps not as hard pressed for money as she had been. But her will drawn in 1705 not long before her death is a document of decayed gentility. She gives to the poor of three parishes, and allots five pounds to be distributed at her funeral. She names carefully some of the linen and jewelery still in her possession from her better days, especially the wedding bodice and the crimson stomacher of flowered satin, in which she had entered the "greatest change of her life."

The appraisal of her estate tells the same story. The whole of her belongings was estimated as worth £174, furniture, bedding, etc., described realistically as "all very old."

Of her funeral we have no record. On her grave there was once a stone with the words "Alice Thornton 1706," but the inscription has long been overlaid with a pavement. Her autobiography was her memorial, in which she fulfilled the duty of every Christian to "take notice of Almighty God's . . . gracious acts of providence . . . and merciful dealings with them, even from the womb until the grave bury them in silence."

## Leonard Wheatcroft

LEONARD WHEATCROFT was a tailor and a man who did odd jobs. To call him a seventeenth-century Bettesworth is not quite accurate, for he was of yeoman status rather than of the labouring classes. Yet he worked with his hands and was at times even more driven to keep going than Bettesworth. He had none of Bettesworth's poetry in him, but he was no less a man of parts. He enjoyed his friends more than his work, and so fell on evil days. Yet like many another good fellow, his friendliness availed him much and work was found for him. He reached old age with enough to live upon, with a wide circle of associates, and with little loss of that gaiety which through good and ill had been his support.

Born in the village of Ashover in Derbyshire in 1627, the eldest of nine children, he followed his father into the tailoring trade. When his father died, Leonard found, like many other eldest sons, that he had his mother and young sisters and brothers to support, and set four of his brothers at learning his own trade.

But there was an interruption. "Then was there wars in England betwixt King and Parliament; then was father against son, and son against father, and brother against brother. Then did I run up and down the country to save myself from being a soldier, but at last I was forced to take up arms, and was a soldier for the space of eight or nine years." Whether he fought for the King at Marston Moor is not certain; he wrote a ballad about the battle as if he had been there. Certainly about 1653 he became a soldier

in Cromwell's army, and for several years thereafter was engaged off and on in one of Cromwell's regiments.

Meanwhile he had become parish clerk at Ashover, a post that paid him little. He had the right at Christmas to go from door to door, singing for a bit of silver:

"A pie—a pudding—or a chine,  
Or else a little piece of beef."

and promising jauntily to toll the bell at his benefactor's death. To his place of parish clerk was added that of parish registrar, for which there was no doubt more reward and more dignity.

Tailoring remained, however, his occupation. He was aware that it was not the most esteemed of trades, and he had of course to speak up for it, "shewing what great praise and renown belongs to the noble and amiable Company of Taylors in this kingdom . . . now slighted and despised by many bumpkins of our times." It was new, this scorn of tailors, he assumed, looking back, as others had done, to a golden world where things had been as they should be. He concluded with his coat of arms:

"Here is my yard wand and my neeld,  
My pressing iron to make stuff yield.  
Here are my shears of silver pure,  
A golden thimble too, I'm sure.  
My bodkin is not far behind,  
And thus my coat of arms is lined."

That at times he had a servant or two to help him appears evident from his allusions to his man and to his apprentices. But his business could not have been prosperous. He was too much a wandering spirit.

In 1657 we find him taking a wife; for some time indeed he had been on the lookout for one. To judge from his poems, he went often to the door of Frances Symth of Higham:

"Oh she shined when she pined,  
Like to pearls in every part,  
That those glances of fair Frances  
Stole away my loving heart

. . . . .  
She doth know how to drive the plough  
Though she in rich array be bound.  
Oh! she's a neat one and complete one  
As ever trod on England's ground."

Leonard's verse was not compact of meaning, but he does tell us something about this rustic maid. Her father, perhaps a hard-bitten yeoman, was opposed to his suit and the door was finally shut in his face. He had to express his indignation:

"I am an heir and that's not all;  
(For I do love her heartily)  
My pedigree it is not small.  
And yet she sparred the door on me."

It was not long before he was writing acrostics about Anne Newton. Five years later he was accepted by Elizabeth Hawley of Winster, and promised her that his pen, his hand, his love, his sword, his life, and all he had were ready to be employed and adventured at her command. Her answer was no less oncoming:

"I will not omit any opportunity that I can get to commend my dearest love unto you, and as a token of my love, I have sent you a band, desiring you to let it embrace your neck—as willingly as you would embrace me. So expecting to hear from you, I remain yours ever, Elizabeth Hawley."

With her letter he was so carried away that he warbled forth these lines:

"I want a quill out of an angel's wing  
To write sweet music, everlasting praise,  
I likewise want an angel's voice to sing  
A wished haven to thy happy days."

Leonard informs the reader that if he would know how many times he went a-wooing, he could find the slashes upon an ash-tree at Winster town end, and how many miles he travelled for his Elizabeth, it was four hundred and forty odd. For two years he had been going on those trips. He went on another with her. "Before the wedding my sweetheart came over to bring some pewter and other things which we might use; so she staying with me awhile, at last returned home, and I awayward with her. So parting with her upon the wild moors I went to fetch in some fat wares which I had bought against the wedding; but before I parted with her I told her I would not come over again till I came for her."

But in May, 1657, he rode triumphantly into Winster to claim her at her father's house. The pearly tears are said to have fallen from the parents' eyes, but when breakfast was ended, "the trumpet of each man's heart sounded to horse." Leonard brought the damsel to the home of the justice of peace ("It was Oliver's law then," that is, marriages were performed by the justices). There was a struggle by the young men for the bride's garters, and then a race for the ribands to Ashover, three ribands for the men and one for the women. The procession moved towards Ashover. "Immediately the word was given that the bride and bridegroom was drawing near the town, the music no sooner hearing this than they came to meet them, and after salutation done, they merrily played before them into the town." Singing and shouting the party reached Ashover to play at quintain in the market. The bridegroom broke his white garlanded spear at the first try and then led the whole party to the feast. There were fourteen tables served twice or more; Leonard had dealt at large with butchers and brewers. When night came on the friends of the couple put them to bed with no small ado, Leonard's servant quietly drawing the guests out of the chamber. Next morning



"the music hearing that we were awake came and saluted us with pleasant lessons and choice tunes, and with them many more to know what rest we took."

For twelve days, if Leonard is to be believed, the festivities went on; Leonard distributed a dozen pairs of gloves among his friends and received many dinners from them. But his expense had been considerable, and Leonard pondered upon it. "What I shall gain by my wedding as yet I cannot tell, for if my wife prove no worse hereafter than she doth already, I hope I shall be no loser at all."

Elizabeth Wheatcroft was soon to discover that marriage was more than feasting and music. Her romantic husband, with all his gaiety and versatility, was less than a good manager. He would wander over the country to wakes and ales, to weddings, christenings, and churchings, to bull baitings and banquets, spending money and letting the tailoring business wait. Fairs he never missed, and there were many of them; sometimes he stayed overnight, like a bad lad. Now and then he reflected upon his irresponsibility, or read over his telltale accounts, and then "wrought very hard." Industrious months were all very good, but he had to break away and visit Little John's grave, or go see a woman who had received no food for forty weeks.

Surely no one of his time walked over more country. During a snowstorm he lost his way on a moor, probably Tansley Moor, and at last hit upon a mark or cairn, and wrote upon it:

"Great monument for my content  
I'll rest me here a while."

Had he been walking a little later in the autumn it is possible that he might have heard curfew bells that would have guided him home. It was not long after, when returning from meeting friends he had long sought, that he crossed the moors between

Matlock and Ashover and set up four heaps of stones that he hoped would stand to many generations.

But his public spirit was not solving his problems, and his friends were chary about helping out. He was getting deeper and deeper into debt. "So running up and down, and being careless in spending what I got, *and more*, my goods was taken for rent, and I could never redeem some of them. . . . I did endure many troubles for two years in 1667 and 1668. I was three times taken prisoner for debt, so that I was forced to make bad bargains for money, and first pawn, then sell my land and inheritance." Even when he was well out of prison he was compelled to make hasty journeys over many moors in the hope of staving off creditors. He could not forget the kindness of George Hodgkinson to him:

"He was a man that was a poor man's friend,  
Oh, now he's gone, who will them money lend?"

His situation grew so desperate that his wife's mother, who had loaned them money before, had to salvage the sinking household, while friends at Ashover and Winster lodged the children. He had moved from Ashover to Bolsover to mend his fortunes, but Bolsover people proved "cross neighbours," and money was as hard to come by as ever. He was glad to slip back to the village of his birth.

There his fortune seemed slowly to change. "Many of our old neighbours bade us heartily welcome home again, though our substance was but small then, for both my wife and I could make [possessed] but two pence in brass at that time." He asked the parish for a house on the common, but the parish officials, more canny than kind, refused to grant it, because he had not sold everything that he had. His wife had already turned to selling ale, and he snipped and cut.

But he was picking up other work. It was a time when gentle-

men were making plantations and orchards around their houses. John Evelyn, the diarist, was buying trees for his Sayes Court estate on the Thames below London and later for his family seat at Wotton in Surrey. Alice Thornton up at East Newton in the North Riding prided herself on the clumps of wood she laid out. The gentlemen of Derbyshire had caught the notion of setting out gardens and orchards and landscaping their estates. As early as 1651 when Leonard was still writing verses to Frances Symyth and teaching his brothers tailoring, he had set out an orchard for the parson at Ashover. When at Bolsover he had planted orchards at Overton for the Hodgkinson family, "made them their gardens, and close hedges, and set several wall trees and a codling [apple] hedge." After he returned to Ashover, he received commission after commission to plant orchards and plantations. He was up and down the country procuring trees at Chatsworth, Barlborough, and Stavely, and then planting them.

He had other jobs, tuning the virginals for a gentleman, turning out a bed and twelve chairs—he owned carpenter's tools—and helping James Wass, a German engineer, with the water-works at Youlgreave.

By many such tasks he put himself on his feet. His wife continued to brew and sell ale at their house which was known as the Hand and Shears, and at one time he bought fifty-two quarters of malt for the brewing. He was busy in other ways. "I wrought and did what I could, so that it pleased God we did a little recover again and got ourselves and our children clothes, paid some debt, *and so by degrees gained our friends again.*" When in 1678 he was able to contribute towards rebuilding St. Paul's church in London, he was happy; he was no longer receiving but giving. It may well be that the death of his uncle in 1678 helped the family, for that will divided the major part of an estate between Leonard and one other relative. But what perhaps helped as much was that the

children were growing up and could turn to their own support.

The Wheatcrofts had added five sons and four daughters to the nation. Two of the sons sought their fortunes in London, one died soon after he had grown up, and a fifth, Titus, stayed at home working first as a tailor and later as a school teacher and parish clerk. The daughters, two of them, went into service, another was apprenticed to a bonelace weaver and later went also into service. At least two of them finally married.

It has been indicated that Leonard regarded himself as a poet, and the years served to widen his fame among his neighbours. Some gentlemen drew him into a contest with a rival, Ouldham, who had written verses making fun of him, and Leonard challenged him on the occupation and names of the muses. The two were to walk on Parnassus Hill, and "both missing our way we chanced to light on an alehouse." It was no strange chance, their destination. At any rate Leonard was crowned by his amused friends with laurel and was known henceforth as the Black Poet.

His rhymes won him an overnight visit to Haddon Hall, a home of the Earl of Rutland who may have relished the special flavour of this village bard. So successfully did he celebrate the Earl's birthday that he was given rare entertainment and something besides.

The memory of such visits Leonard cherished. He liked the gentry; to him they represented the sporting, friendly camaraderie of Derbyshire. Had he not cut their coats, planted their gardens, registered their births and marriages, voted for their sons to go to parliament, and sold them ale? Though his daughters were in service in their houses, though he himself had worked for them, he did not feel himself cut off from their world, nor was he distressed by their patronage. It was one of them who had helped him out of debt and another who had gone off with him to buy trees; they were no less than his loving friends.

It is not surprising that he lamented the end of such families and the death of hospitality. Standing on Oaker Hill he marked sorrowfully the great houses of former days where huntsmen and falconers had stripped off muddy boots and recounted the story of the day. Gone were the Greaves of Birchover, the Steares of Stancliffe Hall, the Columbells of Darley Dale, and the Milwards of Snitterton. The four parsons of divinity whom he had known were now buried in the earth, and Haddon Hall where lived old John Manners was wanting that worthy.

"How can I choose, but much lament to see  
My friends all gone who did make much of me.

. . . . .  
None of my ancient friends I could espy  
In Asher parish I could find not one,  
Old Crich, old Dakin, and old Hodgkinson."

The hunt by Master Henry Lee and his three couples of beagles he celebrated. The fox was spied at Cowbridge and ran to Mabkirk.

"Rare Dido was nimble but not very tall,  
She forced old Reynard to the top of a wall,  
Where for two acre length he never fell by."

But Reynard did not get away. He ran at length upon a mill wheel and was caught in the bucket of the wheel.

The yeomen were his usual companions, the farmers and villagers of Ashover and the country round. They accompanied him to ales and wakes; with them he went to Derby for the election and stayed a whole week before the ale was done. There were the bell-ringers who came over from neighbouring parishes to try their skill at Ashover, from North Wingfield, from Shirland, and from Higham, "pretty men," all of them and indeed a fraternity. For them Wheatcroft set down in rhyme the rules of bell-ringing. After they were through with the bells he liked to

think of them as gathering at the alehouse and singing one another's praises in words that he had written:

"Now here's a glass to all true ringers  
That live in city or in town,  
With all my heart I'll drink two swingers  
If it cost me half a crown;  
For I do love all good ringers  
Let them come from sea or shore  
And he that loves not merry singers,  
I pray you put him out of door."

The same gaiety was evident in the party on the Little Amber river where Leonard and "a few Derbyshire blades" sallied out resolved to turn the stream out of its course, thinking thereby to catch a dish of fish.

In 1680, craving possibly an easier life, Leonard became school teacher at Ashover for two years and, after an interval, for another year. In '85, though he had twenty years to go, he felt suddenly old, and with his wife called his flock of children home, "desiring to see them before I died." The remedy worked, and his recovery was rapid. "So after they had rested awhile with me and told me all their travels and adventures and cheered up their parents' mournful spirits, we all concluded to go to our brother, Robert Hawley's, to a wakes." Off they went. The habits of a lifetime were strong.

Later we find him travelling about to visit his daughters, walking fifty miles at the age of seventy. When his wife died he had to compose another of his many elegies. In the year 1693 he had a misfortune. "I had occasion to go from home, and coming late, losing my way, fell down a rock . . . broke my head in three places and broke three of my ribs. There I lay all night very likely to die." He celebrated his recovery by a tour to the homes of his surviving brothers and sisters. We can see him sitting with

them and talking of past experiences. His children were doing well. He himself had become a character in his mid-Derbyshire world, and age had given him the dignity that comes at length to such a one.

He died in 1706 at the age of eighty and was interred according to his directions in a stone coffin. He had not omitted to write the epitaph for himself.





## Roger Lowe

ROGER LOWE may fairly be called a Lancashire Pepys. He began his diary in 1663, three years after Pepys started his, and, although the Lowe diary, except for a few fragments at the end, covers but three years, some of the vitality and comprehensiveness that characterized the record of the admiralty clerk has crept into the jottings of the apprentice shopkeeper. The men he had to do with were villagers, traders, rural preachers, farmers and farm labourers; the young women he met and kissed were farmers' daughters, innkeepers' daughters and servants, lively north country lasses who knew their own minds. Instead of the gay city and grandeur that Pepys described, Roger wrote of a village and of the country adjacent, where he took part in whatever gaiety there was, and helped to make it.

The village was Ashton in south Lancashire, now known as Ashton-in-Makerfield, not far from Leigh, Warrington and Wigan, and only a day's journey on horseback from the growing centres of Manchester and Liverpool. It was there that he was serving a nine years' apprenticeship, keeping a small general shop for his master, Thomas Hamond, who lived at Leigh.

Keeping shop was a task that meant constant worry for Roger and imposed much attention to detail. The commodities that his master sent from Leigh were duly charged to his account; other commodities he bought from farmers, from shopkeepers in larger towns, from cloth men, and at fairs. At times he was busy making brief expeditions and driving bargains to replenish his supply of wax, honey and candles, or to purchase a quantity of hour glasses

or scythe stones. Besides keeping the shop stocked he had to collect sums from customers who had been trusted for their purchases, and this was a task that took him on many a long walk. The shop weighed most heavily on Roger's mind in the days preceding the time when he expected the master would come or send to have the accounts cast up. What his master might have to say about the state of the business would worry him so much that he was often unable to rest at night. But the master seems to have been content to find the accounts straight. At intervals Roger could show profits of £13, £21, and £48. How he made such profits is hard to understand, for the margin between buying prices and selling prices does not appear to have been large, and the number of customers who were worse than slow in making payment was considerable. For his favourable balance Roger's reward was usually a new suit. Once the customary gift was reduced to a coat which Roger aggrievedly refused to accept. On the whole the master seems to have been kindly disposed to his apprentice but only decorously generous. The master's wife, always called "my Dame" by Roger, was friendly to the Ashton youth, and sometimes made up for her husband's caution.

If the rewards of the shop for the apprentice were not great, the work was not particularly arduous. It was the success of the enterprise, not the labour it entailed, that tormented Roger. He tended shop himself, and whenever he went on errands business had to be suspended. Whoever needed to buy could—and did—send word round the village for him to return. If he were at some distance he would learn from the villagers on coming back what customers had been inquiring for him.

It was not only buying commodities and collecting debts that took him away from the shop. His place was necessarily a kind of village centre, and it behooved him to be a good fellow. That meant frequent trips to the alehouse where he had to take his turn

at paying for the drinks, and this was no small expense to an apprentice. Nearly every day he entered soberly in his diary the amount of this tax on merriment, or once in a while noted with satisfaction that he did not have to pay. He bestowed his patronage as well as he knew how upon all the alehouses in the vicinity, and he was not one to shirk his duty that way. "Came to Goose Green," he wrote, "and there stayed in an alehouse; but it was my great trouble to stay or to have gone this gait, only they were good customers to me and I durst not but go for fear of displeasure." He felt obliged to stop at Gawther Taylor's tavern, for Taylor's wife bought goods at his shop. "She said if I would not come, then farewell." When Mr. Wood, the minister, came to his shop and reprimanded him for being too much in ale, he excused himself that he could not trade if sometimes he did not spend twopence. So persistent was the call of good companions that there were days when Roger was but little on duty. One afternoon he bowled for hours, then rushed back to shut shop, and returned to finish the game. When he did stay in the shop all day it was a fact worthy of note in the diary.

Roger was more than a shopkeeper to the community. He was accountant, solicitor, scrivener, and errand boy in general. When two men quarrelled over their trading, Roger was called in to go over the figures or to arbitrate the issue. Sometimes he drew up indentures. People looking for houses would ask Roger to accompany them and help them with the details of their leases. Occasionally he was summoned to write a will and, as he himself put it, he could do that somewhat handsomely. A villager such as Thomas Heyes might feel equal to composing his own documents, but he would have Roger in to read over the writings. One man wished his son taught how to write and reckon, and Roger good-naturedly tried his hand as educator. He wrote letters for a large and mixed clientele, business letters to London or nearby towns, letters from

wives to husbands, even love-letters. When John Hasleden confessed his infatuation with a wench in Ireland, it was Roger who penned a love-letter for him. He even obliged Anne Barrow, an old flame of his, when she wished to answer a love-letter from Richard Naylor, and Richard acknowledged the favour by sending him a lemon. Clients were, however, not always so well satisfied with the outcome of Roger's letters. Ellin Ashton complained that Roger had written to her son matters which she had not instructed him to put in. "A false lie," Roger declared to his diary, but he hurried off next day to spend twopence at Ellin's and to conclude peace. Roger's pen was also at the disposal of the local ministers who indited verses on the death of a village lass or gave him a long recipe for a purer life: potions composed of a quart of repentance, nine handfuls of faith, and a quantity of other metaphysical ingredients.

Writing was Roger's principal avocation, but his usefulness did not stop there. Anyone with an odd job was sure to think first of Roger, because he was both accessible and willing. When a gentleman needed a man to go to Lancaster and then to London, what was more natural than to ask Roger to find some dependable person? He got track of a maid for Anne Greinsworth, whose accounts he was always going over, and whose letters he wrote to her brother in London. Thomas Johnson of Liverpool sent a lad into the neighbourhood on a business errand and instructed him to report to Roger, who was to accompany him and supervise the transaction. The schoolmaster at Ashton heard of a teaching vacancy near Preston and solicited Roger's help in approaching the right people. In more delicate matters his services were welcomed. He could say prayers at the birth of a child. At the bedside of William Hasleden's wife he sat reading *The Practice of Piety* until "she gave up the ghost." No one in the neighbourhood was more popular as a mourner at funerals. Usually he went of his

own accord, but often he was specially sent for. Sometimes he was asked to bid the guests, sometimes to sit in the cellar and tell off the drawing of flagons.

Next day there were more errands for the living. John Jenkins must have his help to pick sheaves of barley; John Hasleden wanted his company to hunt up a workman; John Potter on his way to have a tooth pulled, needed Roger with him to supply courage. Or very likely the local officials thought it would be wise to have Roger along when they were about some of their duties. The constables were glad of his help when they collected the poll tax. One night he went round with one of them to make private search at every alehouse. When money was gathered for the poor of London after the great fire, Roger was one of those who went about soliciting the contributions. The constables of neighbouring villages came to him to write out their presentments for the assizes. "When I had done, I writ: 'Poor is provided, highways repaired, these queries answered, and clerk unrewarded.'" The constables laughed heartily, but it is not recorded that they took the hint.

For such services it is hard to say how much he was paid. Widow Low gave him a shilling for copying a sermon; old Jenkins paid him eleven shillings and sixpence for making a will and preparing other legal papers. In one instance he was given sixpence for a bond, and by nightfall the alehousekeeper had it. In general he received fees for drawing up formal documents and for making up accounts. Apparently he could do as he pleased with such income, though once his master would not let him keep the three pounds accumulated by writing. In the case of many services Roger would have little need to report his revenue. Custom prescribed no specific remuneration. Services were performed out of good nature for persons who could not or would not offer money compensation. These thrifty Lancashire folk were likely to reward

him with a drink at the alehouse or to assume that their patronage bound him in return to do miscellaneous services for them. Favours circulated as much as money.

Roger's willingness to help everyone meant that he had a wide circle of acquaintances and friends, ranging from labourers and farmers, innkeepers, apothecaries and shopkeepers to Nonconformist ministers and parsons. His social boundaries can be approximately determined by the fact that he deemed it a signal courtesy to be invited to call upon Robert Greinsworth, under-sheriff of Lancashire and son of that Anne Greinsworth whose accounts he looked after. At the same time he was "comely entertained" by Anne Greinsworth herself. He was pleased and more comfortable when he spent an evening with the village schoolmaster or with old Mr. Wood, who had been the parson and was now a Nonconformist minister.

With the minister he would chat about "ministers and other things," about the sufferings of Mr. Calamy, Mr. Gee, and other famous Nonconformist divines. At the alehouse, too, there might be talk of religion, but the conversation was likely to be more personal, "about trading and how to get wives." Talk about the affairs and griefs of "our calling" would be carried forth from the inn and finished late at night in Town Fields. Roger had many of his own troubles to tell and had the gift of listening at length to the troubles of his friends. With old Peter Leland he walked into a field called Horsehead-under-Bank where Peter gossiped on about his woes—a daughter had the falling sickness, one son was void of a calling, the other weak and infirm—until both Roger and the old man fell asleep in the field.

He was dependent upon his friends and their loyalty, he could share their moods of depression and offer sympathy, he was with them in merriment. If they never quite dispelled the feeling that he was alone in the world, they furnished nevertheless a kind of

protection against moods of fear and despondency. When he had a tiff with any of them he was in anguish until he could patch up the difference.

He had friends of every age, but his cronies were those of his own generation. With John Hasleden, Thomas Smith, Roger and James Naylor, and John Potter he passed many an evening in the tavern, lending a hand if one of them from ill tippling began to wind his way home. Roger would sum up such gatherings by the comment: "We were very merry."

For his circle of young men a really happy evening included the village belles. And it is recorded that the young men visited the maidens where they lived or worked, and walked with them in the fields and lanes. On these strolls it seems that often the young people craved the assistance of a third party, and there was no Cupid's proctor better qualified or more called upon than Roger. He would coax the girl to meet the young man, or go with the man to visit the girl, he would remain in attendance at the courtship, and help to carry on negotiations.

He had almost as many friends among the married folk. Sarah Hasleden would lead him off to supper and give him roast goose, and other wives would lure him to a meal or to the alehouse. He was always being asked by the husbands to come and spend the night. Any woman who was getting up an "ale" with music and other inducements expected Roger's presence.

Friendship gave entrée to all the village cheer. It is true that the inhabitants had no theatres, no bull-fights or bear-baitings near at hand, no Vauxhall, none of the countless diversions that Pepys's London furnished, no tailored amusements. Rather there was a ready-made fun altogether dependent on the society of one another and upon the stimulus that the tavern afforded. Weddings, christenings, the end of an apprenticeship, the departure or return of a villager, were public events; even funerals were turned into

occasions. A deceased native was mourned respectfully enough, but the preparations for the funeral took place amidst a buzz that betrayed the eagerness of the young men and women to have a day free from shopkeeping or brewing, from planting, or cleaning pans. Messages flew back and forth while the expectant mourners made plans for the horses; for each maid, it would seem, must have a man, preferably a young man, to ride before her. The mourners crowded the house and overflowed into the yard and the chambers overhead, so that no one noticed particularly if the young people were tying up the loose ends of their courtships while waiting for the procession to start. Death, remarked Nicholas Breton, is the mourner's merry day.

The funeral became an occasion when the customary food and wine were served. Failure to respect that custom curtailed the attendance of guests after the burial of the corpse. At Anne Johnson's funeral the mourners were offered only a loaf, whereat Roger, hungry and angry, fled to Wigan for refreshment. To the funeral of Anne Taylor Roger went fasting, not without anticipation. "At noon when we had buried the corpse and expected according to custom to have some refreshment, and were a company of neighbours sat together round about a table . . . the Doctor comes and prohibits the filling of any drink till after prayers." Roger departed unhappy. "At last with much vexation I gat to Ashton with a hungry belly, and honest Thomas Harrison and right truehearted Ellin, the hasty, yet all love, did much refresh my hungry pallet with a big cup once full, and after that  $\frac{1}{2}$  full again of good pottage."

Weddings were not hampered by the proprieties, but Roger seldom described them with the gusto he bestowed upon funerals. He was best man at John Hasleden's wedding, and attended that of his friend, Thomas Smith. There was a celebration when his fellow apprentice, John Chaddock of Leigh, was married. After



the ceremony Roger was dispatched to Wigan to buy seven yards of ribbon. "We each of us had a yard of ribbon of 12d per yard, and so rid through town." It will be remembered that when Leonard Wheatcroft was wed, the ribbons were the prizes for the winners of the race to Ashover.

It must not be supposed that Roger and his friends had to wait on marriage for their gaiety. An old Ashton friend who had moved away to York sent a shilling to be spent by his former alehouse mates, and Roger drank his share. Sunday was likely to be a convivial day; Roger would go from one house to another, getting food here and drinks there. On a December Sunday John Potter and he went into the alehouse and found it so thronged that they could not sit by the fire. "We sacrificed ourselves o'er the two penny flagon in a cold chamber."

These good Nonconformists do not seem to have been different from others in their pleasures or sports. They fished, they pursued rabbits and hedgehogs, and occasionally fougarts (polecats). Now and then there was a horse-race. Roger bowled rather often, and to his loss. One time he stopped to look at a great company gathered on the heath "with two drums amongst them." The young men were playing prison bars, and Roger with a scoffing air towards what he had not learned to do concluded that it was but a vanity. He must have been more diverted at Chorley Fair where he saw a play, the subject of which was the life of man from his infancy to his old age. But as for singing, that indispensable accompaniment of jollity, there is no evidence that Roger and his friends sang anything but psalms. By the rousing rendition of a psalm at the roadside Roger could transform a sad mood into a hearty one. Yet though his own singing had a purpose, he enjoyed music too; at Manchester he entered the church just as the choristers came in, and was "exceedingly taken with the melody."

It was fondness for music, but it was the novelty as well, that

made him hasten to Mr. Barker's to see the new organ, something he had never heard before. He had eyes in his head that looked out for what might be seen, whether it was coal pits, a burning well, or an acquaintance in the stocks. At Ormskirk he made it a point to enter the church and gaze on the tomb of the Earl of Derby. When at Chester Fair he went into the castle to see a man condemned to die. "A pretty young man he was, and very sorry I was."

It is interesting to find this seventeenth-century apprentice displaying towards old ruins some of that melancholy interest characteristic of the Horace Walpoles and the John Byngs of the next century. He thought it a pity, when he viewed Bradley Hall, to see "so goodly a fabric lying waste." He was impressed with a country seat still in habitation. A female servant ushered him through the place. "We looked up and down, stood upon a hill and saw the land round about. It's the pleasantest place that e'er I saw, a most gallant prospect. Came to Ashurst Hall and Elizabeth took us into the chambers up and down—a most pleasant place and gallant walks." Seldom before the eighteenth century did people stop to admire the view. Before that time country houses were nearly always put on low ground, near water, and away from wind and storm, where there was no prospect of any kind. Indeed where there was a prospect the front of the house sometimes turned its back on it. "The houses of the gentry," wrote Thomas Fuller, "are built rather to be lived in than to be looked on, very low in their situation, for warmth and other conveniences." Roger had been to the residences of gentry on business, but to be shown through such a house seems to have been an experience. His curiosity was indicative; there was a breadth about it; he was a peasant but a good deal more.

He had certain advantages over most of his class. Keeping shop gave him a wide acquaintance with people; it enabled him to

mingle conformably even in circles where his master, for instance, did not appear. Moreover, his education and his utilitarian knowledge gave him an authority that came just short of elevating his position. He was something of a local character.

His own personality contributed to the effect. We cannot but observe that the people of Ashton seldom omitted to pick Roger up on the way to the alehouse, that a man or woman who intended to travel on foot or on horse to a nearby village always invited Roger to come along, that ministers on their way through the district made a point of dropping into Roger's shop and invariably sent for him, if they happened to be anywhere nearby. It was not merely that he was of an oncoming disposition and had that liking for his fellows which ensured their appreciation of him. He was more worth listening to than his neighbours. He had a way with him, and the community recognized as much.

His gift of expression, his humorous way of talking appears throughout the diary, and appears at its perfection in two stories he told about himself. It would be hard in the literature of the seventeenth century to find better peasant humour than is to be seen in those narratives. In each of the stories he dramatized himself as a comic character. He was once leading a ram by a rope towards Leigh when the tup butted him. "I, being unacquainted how to act with tup in rope let him have the length of rope, and tup ran always backwards and fell on me, so that I was put in a terrible fright what to do to save me shins. . . . I laid me down with my head upon my legs, thinking to save my legs, and he gave me such a pat on the head made me turn up white eyes. I thought and was half afraid lest I had gotten old Nick on the rope. I prayed to God to deliver me from the tup and rope, but in the conclusion my bones were sore, brains sick, and heart dead with fear what to do with tup. I looked at tup with an angry countenance but could not tell how to be revenged. Kill him I durst not. . . .

Fair words would not pacify him nor angry countenances affright him; but at last I resolved upon a manly resolution thus: 'What, Hodge, art in a strait? What's the reason of this fear and grief? A tup. A tup? Does that daunt thee? Stand upon thy legs and fight manfully in answer thereunto.' I did, and get a kibbow out of hedge, and tup and I fell to it, but the tup o'ercame me. I could do no good, but down on my knees again. I get hold of tup's horns and of one of his feet and cast him. 'So now, tup, I intend to be revenged on thee,' and smote him on the head. But with great difficulty I gat him to Leigh, but I ne'er was in such a puzzle in all my life as I was with that tup." Here Roger, by way of finale, reviewed once more his tussle with the tup and concluded: "But since then I have known tups, the very name of tups hath been trouble to my ears."

Roger went on with his second story "that the world may see what straits I have been in and what troubles I have undergone in my life." When Roger lived with Mr. Livesey, he was sent to Mr. Henry Lee of High Leigh about a minister for the chapel. Arriving at dinner-time very hungry he was set at table with servants. "Every servant a great bowl full of podige [pottage], anon a great trencher like a pot lid I and all others had, with a great quantity of podige. The dishes else were but small and few. I put bread into my podige, thinking to have a spoon, but none came. While I was thus in expectation of that I could not obtain, every man having a horn spoon in their pockets, having done their pottage, fell to the other dishes. Thought I, these hungry Amelikites that I am gotten amongst will devour all if I do not set upon a resolution. . . . I cast an eye to my trencher—there was a whole sea of pottage before. . . . Well, I resolved: 'Hodge, if thou will have any victuals here thou sees' how the case is, and into whose company thou art fallen into, what a hungry spirit possesses these men. Thou must now resolve upon action.' And a speedy dispatch

with these pottage accordingly I did, and swepted them as if I would have drunk. Then when I had them in my mouth I was in such a hot fit in my mouth turned meditation into action, but at last, to my lamentation, I was worse than before. I would gladly have given ss that I had but had the benefit of air or a northern blast. . . . Help myself I could not, for table was before me and a wall behind me upon my back, a woman with her flasket upon right hand, and a man with his codpiece upon the other, and in this sad condition I sat blothering, knew not what to do best. Those few pottage I tasted was both dinner and supper. I at last rise from table with a hungry belly but a lamenting heart, and e'er since I have been cautious how to sup pottage, and likewise wary. Nothing worser to a man than over-hastiness, especially in hot concernments; hot women, hot pottage, and angry tups beware of and pray to be delivered from."

It is hardly surprising that the injunction against women leapt to Roger's tongue as he wound up the story, for when Roger had trouble with his friends, often as not, it arose out of his own or his companions' love affairs. Those affairs are in some ways the most significant matters in the diary. Among the gentry in the seventeenth century—we know more of them because their letters were often kept—fathers and mothers had most to do with the making of matches. In that class money was certainly the pivot of the projected felicity. It was hardly the same with the common folk of Lancashire. Parental approval was not indeed to be scoffed at, as Roger found out, nor a comfortable income to be despised, but the actual courting was left in the hands of the young people themselves. Nor was it a purely masculine affair. The young women did their full share, and in hearty peasant fashion made their preferences apparent. "At night," wrote Roger, "I met with Margaret Wright, Mr. Sorowcold's maid. She needs would have me with her home. I went and she made much of me." Not every

young woman, nor every young man for that matter, was as direct as Margaret. Ann Hasleden resorted to the method of inviting a friend to assist her, sundry times asking Roger to bring Henry Lowe to call. Henry proved entirely willing, and when he and Roger kept their appointment with Ann, they were served spiced drinks and "very much made of we were." Making much of young men was apparently an informality that Lancashire lasses understood and the young men appreciated.

The informality must have gone too far sometimes, but we have only one instance of that recorded by Roger. "I was entreated per Richard Asmull to go with him and John Hasleden into Hindley. There was a wench had laid a child on him. So we went, and in Mr. Lanckton[']s fields she was, and she ardently manifested him to be the father of the child in her womb; so we parted." Asmull then took Roger and Hasleden into the alehouse and spent sixpence on them and Roger went his way without comment or any indication that his puritan soul was shocked.

The reliance that Roger's friends placed upon him in their love affairs did not signify that he was wise in his own. He was popular enough with the young women, his attentions were often welcomed and even sought; he was in his way even a favourite with them. But although he was determined to have a bride, and was obviously more eager than particular, the young women of Ashton and its environs received his proposals with unfeigned reluctance. His tendency to be on with the new love before he was off with the old was not unnoticed. He was once discoursing at the alehouse with Roger Naylor about Aesop's fable of the dog who caught at the shadow and lost the substance, whereupon Naylor applied the lesson to Roger, suggesting that Roger might be doing just that. Roger was amazed and hurt. The girls of the community had long since ceased to be amazed, and they were naturally not convinced by Roger's professions of love. He had another dis-

advantage in their eyes. So far as they could judge, his instability in flirtations was more than matched by the inadequacy of his prospects.

Roger had innumerable encounters, but he elaborated on two affairs that wrung from him expression symptomatic of passion in any age or clime, one with Mary Naylor and the other with Emm Potter. When the diary opens he had been wooing Anne Barrow but had grown tired of her, "fearing the acceptance of love." He made it plain to Anne that his attentions were over, a painful business for one of his wooing disposition. A few months later he was instrumental in furthering James Naylor's courtship of her.

Almost at once after his dismissal of Anne, he fell into a tempestuous affair with Mary Naylor, vows of eternal love alternating with quarrels, tears and reconciliations. The two resolved "because we lived severally that we would not act so publicly as others, that we might live privately and love firmly, that we might be faithful to each other in our love till the end." And Roger marked this occasion as the first night he had stayed up a-wooing in his life. But Mary's mind was vacillating. "I went to Roger Naylor[']s, and Mary cried to me, said she would have nothing to do with me, was highly displeased at me; but in the conclusion she was well pleased, would have me go with her day after to Bamfurlong, and she would go before, and to signify she was before, she would in such a place lay a bough in the way, which accordingly she did, and I found it." It was love in country lanes, but not quite the sweet romance or the fated hopelessness of which the poets tell. Yet Roger knew how to use lanes to advantage. If he found Mary moody, he would follow her down the lane while "she went give calf drink," and she would change her manner. Next day she would drop in at his shop, be all friendliness, and put the rhetorical question, "Am not I a wise wench to engage myself thus?" But matters ran far from smoothly. Mary's

father did not approve of Roger, and Mary became frightened lest her friends should cease to respect her.

Even in his darker moments Roger believed that the Lord was attending to the matter in his own way, for one day, after talking to Mary, he wrote: "When I came home there was a direct N and half of M providentially made upon my breeches, plain to view in any man's sight, made of mire with leaping." It was not long after that he was able to find Mary alone and very pleasant; that evening he went back to his shop, lit the candle, and jubilantly sang the seventy-first psalm.

But Mary remained afraid of parental displeasure. Roger would look out when her father went to chapel on Sunday or left his house on another day, and would visit her; she would come to the shop and he would take her part way home.

Mary's fluctuations furnished no solid mooring for Roger's own inconstant nature. He was the sort of person who would not wait too long on her or on Providence. His sorrows when Mary had frowned on him and refused an explanation had not restrained him from presenting his service to Ellin Marsh, who had a house and living. This he did by a private mediator. Ellin promised to meet him if he would keep the conference secret, and that, at the moment, Roger was only too glad to do.

One might have supposed that an eternal friendship with Mary Naylor and secret negotiations with Ellin Marsh would have been all that Roger could manage with impunity. On the contrary he was capable, without any pang, of renewing his old relationship with Anne Barrow at the moment when he was persuading Anne to look with favour upon his friend, James Naylor. He entreated Anne for himself "to be the next in succession if in case they two should break off, to which she did not say no, neither yea." It was Anne whom Roger had shaken off a few months before. She might well hesitate to fish for this amorous eel a second time.



At the same time he continued to court Mary. Her love for him he believed lightened his griefs. Like others he could find sweet love remembered an anodyne for his outcast state. He was certain that his affections were centred upon Mary's virtues and womanly qualities, but we may suspect that he was in that stage of a young man's development when he loved the emotion rather than the person who induced it.

Roger had by no means finished fitting extra strings to Cupid's bow. In the very midst of these complicated affairs he wrote: "I was at this time in a very fair way for pleasing my carnal self, for I knew myself acceptable with Emm Potter, notwithstanding my love was entire to Mary Naylor in respect of my vow to her, and I was in hopes that her father countenanced me in the thing." He saw nothing out of the way in his behaviour, but he was presently shocked to the core at the duplicity of others. It was James Naylor who blasted Roger out of this particular intrigue. James, who must have come to suspect that his advocate was putting in a few words for himself with Anne Barrow, rifled his sister's band-box, purloined all the letters that Roger had written her, and let Anne read the latter's secrets with Mary. Then indeed did Roger's faith in human integrity all but collapse. His "pretended friend" he dubbed a "stinking rascal," a "malicious, dissembling, knavish rascal." He concluded that if people could do things like this only God could be trusted, but on the way home John Damme gave him some apples, which were immediate comfort.

Roger took this episode hard. He babbled about the vale of death and his need of God's rod and staff to comfort him. He never did regain the confidence of Anne Barrow and Mary Naylor. Anne, like a sensible girl, eventually took Roger aside for a calm rectifying of all businesses between them, and then discreetly withdrew. As for Mary Naylor, he was nearly at the end of his eternal friendship with her. She is not mentioned in the diary for months,

but when Roger finally saw her again, although she received him affectionately, he told her she was a false dissembling person. "She took it heinously," Roger observed, not without satisfaction. Shortly after Roger tried to patch things up. Mary was kindly but refused to renew the old relationship. "I set her light as she did to me, and so I parted."

Meanwhile Roger had not overlooked his prospects with Emm Potter. A month after his parting with Mary, Emm came to comfort him through a day's illness. His affair with her began to take on the intensity of the recent one with Mary. He resented another's attention to Emm, although the admiration of another man may have stimulated his determination to win her. As other girls had done, Emm paused on the brink of serious alliance with Roger, and he was in consequence in a sad fit, utterly disconsolate again. He took his troubles to one of Emm's friends and wept so freely that she pitied his state and arranged for him to meet Emm, with the happy result that they "professed each other['s] loves to each other." It was next evening, after attending prayers, that Roger made his way to the window of the chamber where Emm lay, and "would gladly have come in." But Emm was a wise wench. "She durst not let me in, but she rise up to the window, and we kissed."

The preliminaries thus attended to, the affair went on for months, as it had with Mary. Roger and Emm quarrelled and made up, etc. And as usual Roger had his mind on other possibilities; he heard of a desirable wife in Chester worth £120 and jumped at the idea. "I was glad of the business and had some hopes of freedom from my master." But nothing came of this proposal, and Roger continued his interest in Emm.

That such a periodically lovesick boy should be extraordinarily religious is not surprising. It was at religious services that he felt perhaps most happy. The reader will remember that in the reign

of Charles II all religious services save those of the Established Church were forbidden by law. Roger was a Nonconformist, and Nonconformists had to hold their meetings as quietly as possible. At one meeting we see the minister whispering to the worshippers the time and place of the next coming together, which was likely to be on a Sunday, but might well be during the week, and usually at a private house. Once when Roger's friends were gathered in a house for a service, a few papist women came in unexpectedly, and the meeting had to be called off. This secrecy no doubt spiced the worship and gave an adherent like Roger a sense of importance. Unobtrusive meetings were being held in Ashton, when the diary opens, under the ministry of Mr. Wood, who had been the curate there before the puritan ministers in 1662 were put out of their pulpits. To the regret of his followers, Wood moved into Cheshire, and for months after his departure there was a dearth of local services. Roger was forced to travel to neighbouring villages that he might hear a sermon, an inconvenience mitigated by halts at alehouses with friends on the way to and from the services. Mr. Wood, however, made periodic trips back to Ashton to revive his flagging flock.

In this flock, Roger had a definite position. He was the mainstay of Mr. Wood and of other ministers; at the services at John Robinson's and at other houses he was easily a figure. If for any reason the minister was absent, Roger could repeat a sermon to the assembled faithful; he did equally well to a Sunday gathering of young people in the fields. At services he might feel exercised to pray, but it is noticeable that when he did not feel so disposed, he would refuse. Whatever his position as a shopkeeping apprentice, his place in Nonconformist activities must have given him a confidence in himself that he often needed. When he wrote, after an evening at Robinson's, "Oh how comfortable is the communion of saints," we may suspect that his heart was warmed not only by

a spiritual glow, but by the realization of the esteem he commanded in his religious circle.

That esteem was doubtless justified by his knowledge of theology and by his ability to carry on an argument about it. Theology was his intellectual outlet; there was nothing he liked better to discuss, even though the discussion often tended to become acrimonious. He was glad when he could report that in the disputations he and his friends had been "very loving," but that was far from the usual case. When he argued with a friend about the claims of presbytery versus episcopacy, the two men were so stirred up against one another that they did not speak for two or three days. With the vicar of Huyton Roger threshed out the question of the Anglican orders. "He said they were apostolical. 'Yea,' quoth I, 'they are apostatical from the truths of God.'" Roger was afraid that the vicar was displeased, but on a later visit to Huyton, he and the vicar enjoyed a merry time together at the alehouse. Roger contended with Catholics as well, defending Luther against the jibes of a papist friend; but there is nothing to indicate that he had the horror of Romanism common among puritans. He was too interested in theology not to listen to what anyone might have to say about it. In his diary he relates that, hoping to get his mind off Emm Potter, he went several times to hear the Bishop preach, and doubtless approved of his sermon "against atheisticalness."

Listen and argue Roger might, but he did not intend to be browbeaten. Because he had not stood at the reading of the gospel, he received what he termed "some piece of disgrace" from Mr. Atkinson, the clergyman who took charge at Ashton in 1668. After evening prayer, Roger pursued Atkinson to Ellin Ashton's where he spoke his mind, declaring that standing at the gospel, with other ceremonies then in use, was mere Romish foppery. Hereafter, declared Roger, since he could not come to the public ordinances without a scene, he would betake himself to such re-

ceptacles (conventicles, he meant) where he could serve God without disturbance. "Ralph Winstanley, Atkinson[']s] disciple of the Black Tribe of Gad, came in and spoke his venom . . . but I fly to God for refuge." Standing up to vicars hoisted Roger's self-respect.

It will be seen that Roger's religion was not of a highly spiritual type. His puritanism was a kind of theological partisanship. The puritan was given to meditation upon his spiritual successes and failures, he was inclined to dwell upon hours when he had been in touch with his God, or to lament days when the face of the Almighty was turned from him. His was a life of reflection. Emotion recollected in tranquillity was the poetry of his everyday life. There was emotion enough in Roger, but little recollection, and no tranquillity, and consequently no beauty or poetry. There was no uplift to his faith, rather something immediately useful in times of defeat. "God's providence," he wrote, "is the poor man's inheritance."

He was less a puritan than a Nonconformist with some of the lower middle-class attributes that tended to gather round Nonconformity. He had that eagerness to do good, to improve his neighbours in accordance with his own conceptions that we associate with the Nonconformists. Calling on his sister, Katharine, he "advised her for her good to bethink herself and live godly, considering she had but a short time to live here." His sister was naturally offended. Even more misplaced was his zeal in another instance. He went to look upon Anne Smith who had drowned her child, and was in hold presumably awaiting the assizes. As the poor creature sat with hanging head by the chimney, Roger, not content with seeing her misery, exhorted her to repent and spoke of the mercifulness of God, who had pardoned David the adulterer and murderer.

To Roger's credit must be said that he recorded his own weak-

nesses, though not quite with the relish of Pepys in evil-doing. In spite of his church-going, his ability to repeat sermons and his godly conversations with ministers, he could not always keep his mind on the services. During a sacrament, and a solemn occasion it was, his thoughts had been on Mary Barton who was sitting not far away. After an agreeable Sunday afternoon in the alehouse with friends from Leigh who had brought wenches with them, Roger wrote remorsefully: "The Lord forgive us." It was not wrong to visit a tavern between sermons, but to spend the whole Sunday afternoon in the company of young women, in other words to have too good a time on the Lord's day, was questionable. His conscience pricked him, too, when he had been drinking and felt the worse for it. He had a poor stomach for alcohol, and the day following a merry evening was frequently less than comfortable. With his headache he was likely to remember the Lord who "instigated the pain." Once, however, when he was sick for a day and a night from too much ale, the Lord relented to the extent of strengthening him.

It has been seen that Roger was easily emotional. He was fond of giving his emotions a quiet opportunity. Sometimes they played leapfrog within him, as when he wrote of a communion service: "It was a joyful night and a sad night." He found himself one day in the village of Leigh and betook himself with his sister to the churchyard to weep over the graves of his father and mother. Something there was about churchyards and their inhabitants not to be missed; they offered the chance to mourn over the frailty and perishability of man. Roger was pleasantly moved by considering "how one day houses, lands, goods, yea and friends and all will leave us." It was Roger's version of "Alas, poor Yorick." He climbed to the top of the church steeple with John Hindley, and they "discoursed of former days and passages past and gone." They could look down on the churchyard; there was the grave of

Sanders Sixes, and they could remember when he broke his neck out riding. Another day Roger looked down from the steeple and watched the sexton digging a grave. Death was indeed terrible, but it had a fascination. It was a subject not to be shunned, as we shun it today, but to be cherished. Roger had been told often enough by the minister that the sexton was not the last word, but save in his verses, where he is conventionally eager to leave his unhappy lot in this world and reach to friends in another, he was not interested in the other world.

His verse ought not to be mentioned, and yet he would have mentioned it, and it was part of him. His rhymes were hardly better than the average of village verse of his time, if as good. When writing to a friend who had failed him in correspondence, he added:

“When I into your letter once did see  
And be-held no remembrance of poor me,  
Then to myself I said: ‘Hodge thou’rt forgot,  
For he in his letter Lowe remembers not.’”

Eles Leland asked Roger to write a message from her to Thomas Smith, one of Roger’s cronies, and Roger finished it off with:

“Your friendship’s like the morning’s dew  
No sooner come but bids adieu.  
With other objects you are taken,  
And little Hodge is quite forsaken.”

After a falling-out with Emm Potter, Roger was low in his mind, and tried to translate his distress into verse. We will quote sparingly:

“Let world say best and worst, all’s one to me,  
In time my quarrel will revenged be.

. . . . .  
And they that are the actors of my grief  
May they cry out and yet find no relief.”

This must have sounded a little un-Christian, for Roger reconsidered:

"But this I wish not: O, that they might be  
Preserved from all such kind of misery."

If his shop duties and love affairs were both depressing him he indited some of his worst verse:

"Thou wilt not suffer me long t' live in woe  
Sure, Lord, thou'll come to visit thy poor Lowe."

Roger's confidence that the Lord would not allow him indefinitely to live in woe was not entirely justified. Shop matters became so pressing that he could think of little else. His relations with his master, Thomas Hamond, were giving him uneasiness. Hamond had always been considerate, and usually inclined to be pleased with Roger's management of the shop, even when Roger feared that he was not doing well enough. But his master had possibly picked up some of the gossip about Roger and his love affairs, and warned his apprentice to be careful. From Chaddock, the apprentice in the shop at Leigh, and from others, Roger began to hear reports that his master proposed to move him to Leigh. It was a move that Roger dreaded, fearing perhaps that he would have less freedom there, and that he would be unable to gather in the extra shillings that he gained in Ashton.

It is possible that his master believed him to be neglecting the shop on account of his preoccupation with Mary and Emm, and there would have been many in the community so to inform him. Roger may very well have been away from the shop a good deal of the time and have given his best thoughts to matters other than buying and selling.

His own conscience, indeed, troubled him about a visit to a cock-fight or an idle trip to Prescot or Wigan, though it may have been less his failure towards his master than the fear that he



was standing in his own way. He was always excusing his expenditures at the alehouse, as if he knew only too well that the sixpences were slipping through his fingers there, and that a lot of sixpences would be needed if he ever hoped to set up for himself.

There were probably more fundamental reasons for his dissatisfaction. He was spending his years without acquiring knowledge, as he called it, that is, the special kinds of business expertness that would enable him to get on. He had enough experience to understand the usefulness of special training. And he was becoming increasingly sensitive about the humble nature of his post. He was angry one day in the alehouse when Nicholas Houghton "began to give disdainful words out against the art of a grocer or a mercer, and so particularized it as to me." This sensitiveness appeared, too, when he noted in his diary that someone had shown him great respect. It was egoism, but also an alertness in estimating his own position in the eyes of others.

We may guess that he had come into little from his parents. The brother who figures in the diary seems to have been desperately poor, and the one sister (there were two sisters, but we know little about the other one) and her husband were not much better off. Roger may have come from one of those families that have ability but no other inheritance to leave their offspring.

It was no mean inheritance, but it did not serve to make him happy, rather to make him realize what he lacked. He had proved himself competent in his work, and he could not but compare himself with those more rich in fortune. "I must confess I have a proud, envious spirit, seeing and thinking of others in their prosperity, and am apt to censure God for hard measure unto me." It was his way of saying that there was something wrong with a system that fixed one of his talent on so low a rung of the ladder, although, of course, he never thought of systems. Had he been

a working man today, he would have deemed himself a victim of capitalism.

This humble position hurt him the more because he realized that in spite of his attractiveness to women, he was regarded by their parents and even by the young women themselves in their harder Lancashire moments as no great catch. It was the distraction born of this realization that perhaps made him such a trimming adventurer in love. If God seemed about to provide a wife with a house and living, someone who could rescue him from his apprenticeship, who was he to frustrate the divine will with an affair of the heart?

In his worry about his position he always flew to the Lord. His problem was to help Providence to solve his own inscrutable plan for himself. When he wrote: "I was very sad all day, but the Lord is my comfort," we need not be concerned about his spiritual condition; his troubles were of this earth and he would not leave his God unenlightened about them. There were always minor troubles to be disposed of; the Lord's attention might be called to a tedious stitch in his back, or to his inability to unsnarl his love tangles. But his major worry the Almighty was given little opportunity to overlook. "When I came home I was very pensive and sad in consideration of my poverty, and I sung the 24th psalm, and after I was very hearty." Poverty it was, and the ill-esteem that accompanied it, that irked this north-country lad. He tried to assure himself that "they're not so happy as have these worldly enjoyments," but that was tame cheer.

He could not but be envious. "Yet grudge not to see wicked men prosperous, it's but a while they shall flourish thus; prosperity will be hard pennyworth for them." To see the rogues flourish and honest folk droop was no easier in his generation than in any other. But who were these wicked, one asks, that were to receive the hard pennyworth. Surely not the gentle families, whose tenants and serv-

ants were his associates; they scarcely impinged upon his world. Was he thinking of those among his own class, the Hasledens and the Chaddocks, who were getting on more rapidly than he, of the young men whom he assisted in their business affairs, whose wives he had wooed for them? His mood of malevolence towards his own associates seems less than gracious. It was a comfort to him to believe that God would punish them, that God was looking out in particular for him. "God hath enough in store for me," he wrote, which was his peasant way of expressing his faith in his own star.

Yet more than once he had doubts. Was God inevitably on his side? Might it not be that his lack of success meant that God was angry with him? When such fears came upon him, he was likely to go out in the evening to Town Fields or the heath, and kneel in a ditch to indulge himself in long prayers. It was troubles with his master or blighted affection that brought him to the ditch, but his supplication dealt directly with the real cause of his discontent. And why to the ditch? There only was there privacy to pray.

Towards the end of his diary Roger's affairs suddenly took what seemed to be a turn for the better. In November, 1665, his master offered to let him have goods on credit and go free. Roger was to take over the stock, paying for it as he could, an arrangement which, so far as we can judge without the details, seems to have been fair to Roger. He was now in command.

Roger began buying commodities on his own, using credit with some of his old friends among the merchants in the larger nearby towns. His difficulty was probably that he did not have long credit, as his master had had, and that he found the old debts to the shop impossible to collect. It is to be said for him that as soon as he gathered in any money he was quick to pay back his own debts. But it was not long before he found that being on his own

was not what he had expected; his worries were increasing rather than diminishing. A noticeable sobriety crept into his diary from this time on, and much of the boyishness disappeared. There were fewer visits to the alehouse, fewer descriptions of idle love-making, more records of time spent seriously at work.

But in spite of his best efforts, things continued to go badly for him, and he finally handed the shop at Ashton back to his master and entered the service of Thomas Peake of Warrington, who had long wanted him in his shop. His wages were twenty pounds for three years. Mrs. Peake proved "of such a pestilential nature" that Roger was soon weary of his arrangement. It would appear that he went back eventually to Ashton. When he died in 1679 he left, in his house and shop, property appraised at sixty pounds, and probably owned the shop.

Long before that, however, he had felt certain enough of an income to be able to settle down to something more stable than his eternal friendship. Without the exuberance and wealth of detail that he had used in describing his romances, he announced his marriage to Emm Potter. He had sent Emm his "designs and thoughts" in letters, thus making a conclusion of his "overtired thoughts," and the two consummated their "grand design of marriage" in 1668. Even before that date Roger was keeping his diary only intermittently, and now it rapidly fades out. The last we see of him, he is still attending funerals, collecting debts, carrying marriage proposals from suitors to eligible women, and helping a neighbour to recover a stolen mare.

## Adam Eyre

TWO years after Adam Eyre returned from the wars he began to keep a diary. It is the story of a farmer who had been an officer in the parliamentary army, had commanded men, learned something of the rigours and excitements of war, and then came home to his old routine and found it hard to rise in the morning and work till dusk, as a yeoman must do. It was still harder because his interests lay not in the fields but in the money that was due him from the government, his back pay; getting the money seemed a bigger job than work in the fields and one more likely to make him independent.

His diary, running from 1647 to 1649, tells us almost nothing of the political struggles of the time but reveals a good deal about yeomen, a class too busy to do much writing about themselves. When we finish the more than a hundred pages of print, we ought to know something not only of yeomen, but of Adam as a person, what sort of man he was, what he thought about his wife and his neighbours, what he assumed were his duties towards them and theirs towards him. We may read the diary several times before we are able to answer those questions and to satisfy ourselves about Adam's situation or to venture an interpretation of him as a member of his generation. Even then we are somewhat in the dark about him. Could we have seen him in a crowd at the market or at a funeral, would we have been able to pick him out? Has he told us enough that we can understand him? Or is there so much that he has failed to tell us that the springs of his conduct remain hidden?

He had come home from the wars to a good country, to the land of moors and dales. His farmhouse stood high above the little river Don at a mean altitude of seven hundred feet, but around it rose moors hundreds of feet higher. Today the country, cut off by the hills from the industrial districts only a few miles away, looks much as it must have looked when Adam walked across the fields to visit his neighbour, William Rich, at Bullhouse, or when he set his fishing hooks in the Rocher Pit at a bend in the river, just below his house. The country to the west was heavily wooded, and the climate on the east slopes of the moors was cold and damp, damper than on the plains a few miles to the east. In the winter the mists were so foul that Adam, crossing the moors at night, would lose his way. But in summer, when the grass stood ready for cutting and the sheep grazed on the slopes, when meadows were vivid green and moors dark grey, with patches of purple in August, the country was one to be remembered.

Adam's people had come from Derbyshire where Eyres had long been known in a small way, even in song and story. His father who had moved north and bought the land and farmhouses known as Haslehead had been a man of some property. Adam himself was sometimes styled "Master," *i.e.* gentleman, but there is no reason to believe that the heralds had ever urged him to take upon himself a coat of arms or that Adam aspired to any other designation than yeoman. Up in the dales, as in some other parts of the country, the line between well-to-do yeomen and small gentry was no hard and fast one. The families who were Adam's friends, the Micklethwaites, the Haighs, the Riches, the Wordsworths, and the Appleyards were of the same status as he, a little less than small squires.

Yet yeomen they were, and so indeed different from gentlemen. Adam hardly mentions his clothes and he tells us incidentally that he had his hair cut after three years. Sir John Oglander of the

Isle of Wight in discussing a neighbour gentleman remarked that his person was slovenly: "You would take him for a farmer rather than a knight." Yeomen did not go as gallant. They were different in other ways. Their duties in local government, though arduous enough and important for the village, were humbler than those of the squires. They were harder working and more thrifty; they had to be if they were to get on; and hence they made a virtue of work and thrift as did their New England descendants. They were more neighbourly than their betters, as was fitting to those likely to need one another's good turns.

In the textbooks they are always mentioned as the class that furnished the bowmen of Crécy and Poitiers, and they appear no more in those dull pages unless when they are disappearing from the land. But in the ballads, from those about Robin Hood down, they are the good, kindly folk who deserve well of the greenwood and the castle. In the Elizabethan and Stuart plays they are in the main vigorous, self-respecting men who ask no favours and are the backbone of merry England. So they are in the many tracts, "the valiant race of the ancient English yeomanry, . . . the principal base and foundation of the commonwealth." It was about yeomen that Thomas Fuller, who had written of worthies and the great, grew most eloquent. Few indeed there were in the seventeenth century who would not have regarded the yeomanry as the hard, resistant fibre in the English character.

Yorkshire yeomen were possibly of a tougher fibre than those of the southern shires. They lived in a country from which it was hard to extract a living; they were used to long, dark winters and raw, searching winds; they were many of them the descendants of the Vikings and as hard-bitten as their ancestors. Even the epitaphs in the churches of the moorlands are those of a stern people, who knew their rights and remembered their wrongs. Like the men in the Norse sagas they were a melancholy folk; perhaps some of the

greyness and lonesomeness of the moors had penetrated their beings. The brooding and doomed figures that stride through the Brontë novels or that walk unbidden into detective stories of Yorkshire belong in that dour land. Above all Yorkshire yeomen were a restless people who had had to cross many hills to find out their valley lands.

It must not be assumed that all these characteristics were to be met with in Adam Eyre. He was neither hard-bitten nor touched with an ancestral melancholy. But he was restless and with reason. He had had a taste of another way of living and could not take up the farming life where he had left it. His inability to conform, his dissatisfaction with his lot, caused him to devote the time that should have gone to sowing and ploughing to two widely different pursuits. He spent many hours in reading and wandered over the countryside on his own and parish errands.

In his love of books he was hardly a typical yeoman, but there were a good many of his kind. Nicholas Breton makes a countryman say: "For learning . . . this is all we go to school for, to read common prayers at church and set down common prices at markets, write a letter and make a bond; set down the day of our births, our marriage day, and make our wills when we are sick, for the disposing of our goods when we are dead." But there were other yeomen families who sent their bright sons to school and sometimes gave them a chance at further study, and who owned a shelf or two of books. Adam himself had a carpenter in to furnish his study with shelves, and his friends were always borrowing from those shelves.

Rarely did he return from a visit to one of the larger towns without bringing home a book; sometimes he had a whole package sent to him, and he went through them with care. "This day I rested at home likewise and spent most of the day in reading," such is a typical entry. He began to make a table of a book called



*The State of Europe*. He read *A Discourse of the Council of Basel*, "wherein as in all the actions of men is little save corruption," a comment that gives us an inkling of Adam's philosophy of history. He read Lilly's queer books of prophecy, and Walter Raleigh's *History of the World*, a best seller of the century; he dipped into Erasmus' *Praise of Folly* and James Howell's *Dendrologia: Dodona's Grove or the Vocal Forest*. He owned Dalton's *Country Justice*, a practical manual concerning the duties of justices of peace and of other local officials.

A larger part of his reading was in religious books, pleas for presbytery, arguments for independency or congregationalism, volumes of sermons by this or that famous preacher. The number of religious books he covered is astonishing. "This day I rested at home all day and had various thoughts by reason of the variety of men's opinions I find in reading." Surely it was the beginning of wisdom to reflect upon the variety of opinions. Adam was not a deeply spiritual man; he read these books because religion was in the air. It filled the news-letters and pamphlets of the day, as strikes and sports items crowd our dailies. Religion was involved with village squabbles in the West Riding as with factions at Westminster. Men stood and fell in the estimation of their community on the basis of religious opinions and the performance of religious duties.

The rest of his time Adam dawdled away in excursions about the countryside. He wandered over the moors and down the dales visiting his former companions in arms. But conversation with his army cronies was not the purpose of all his travels. Like other yeomen he had duties in local government, which in the unsettled state of his own affairs he probably welcomed; this work afforded him chances for chats with neighbours in the alehouse; it extenuated his fidgety loafing. He went with others to Penistone about the county accounts, he received warrants and remittances for

Edward Coldwell's constablenesship. Now he had to attend a meeting about altering the ley, or assessment, now to receive a statement of accounts from the churchwardens, now to arrange for the glazing of the windows of the church, now to take some course about Elizabeth Sykes who had fallen into the fire and had been put under the care of the widow Swallow.

As a local dignitary of a disposition to ramble Adam soon found a problem to deal with that more or less suited his mood. Early in the diary we learn that the neighbourhood was scheming to eject the vicar of Penistone. Vicars were named for life, often by the lord of the manor. But these were the days of puritan control, and parliament had authorized Lord Fairfax to fill vacant livings in Yorkshire, no doubt expecting that he would consult the communities. The parish of Penistone was intent on ridding itself of Mr. Dickinson. Adam advised the vicar to compromise with the neighbours for his own sake so that he would not imperil his chance of another post. Dickinson was of no compromising temper. "He told me he thought to be vicar at Penistone when somebody [meaning Adam] should be turned out of their estates." The parish offered Dickinson forty pounds in cash if he would go, and they were willing to allow him the use of the vicarage until the following May. The forty pounds had not been easy to raise from north-country farmers, but Adam, assisted by William Rich, Ralph Wordsworth, John Micklethwaite and others, had been busy riding round the parish getting money and promises to pay. When the vicar rejected the money, his parishioners were at their wits' end. The only course left open to them was to put in writing the charges against him, and forward the document to the Committee on Plundered Ministers in London, one of the many committees that had been set up by the puritan rulers. Adam was deputed to take the certificates to London.

Such an errand was not undertaken lightly. It was the middle

of March, when Yorkshiremen were at their spring planting, but Adam left that to his tenant. For the trip he needed ready money, and he sold some "shelling" or shelled dried oats for twenty-one pounds, eight shillings. He was getting a new suit made in Wakefield, and he started for that town, taking his wife along. There the old trouble with her leg developed again, and Adam left her at the inn under the care of a physician, paying him twenty-two shillings and promising him more if he could cure her.

Back in Haslehead Adam attended to those last things that had to be done before setting out on such a long journey to London. He knew that he would have bad roads at the start until he reached the main highway which ran south through Sheffield and was at best none too good. There was always the danger that a horse might throw his rider or be mired. Highwaymen were not a common peril but country travellers to London feared city rogues who would recognize an outlandish accent and cozen a man out of his money. Adam felt it well to leave everything shipshape. He made a note of two books on his study board that were to be returned to their owner, a rare honesty; he put down on paper his financial affairs with all his debts carefully recorded, and in the early morning set forth to London.

The certificate concerning the vicar which Adam carried to the committee in Goldsmiths' Hall in London was puritan in every word. The signers called Dickinson a "pretended minister," and a man of "scandalous life and conversation." He had been chaplain to a malignant officer, by which they meant a cavalier; he had intruded himself during the time of the trouble into the ministry at Penistone; he had preached the sermons of other men, and the same sermons again and again, "without any progress at all, only tiring the time with tautologies and vain iterations." He was, they asserted, a frequenter of alehouses and idle company and had several times been drunk.

The Committee on Plundered Ministers at Goldsmiths' Hall was slow to act. All that Adam was able to bring back was an order to have the charges referred to another committee delegated to settle matters relating to the West Riding. This meant further delay, that Penistone would have to put up with its tippling vicar a while longer.

In mid-April Adam returned to the West Riding. The very day after his arrival he went fishing, and on the following day fished until noon, a diversion to which he had no doubt looked forward as he had been wearing London pavements smooth. He was again in his own country, relapsing into rural pleasures and routine. On Easter Sunday he rode to Cawthorn to hear Mr. Broadley preach on the excellence of divine government by examples of "terrene" governments. Even then it seems, the governments of this earth were not what they should have been. That night it snowed; rain and flood followed. Adam rode over to Penistone to present his account for the London journey, thinking perhaps to be reimbursed for his expenses. But only two men appeared at the meeting, and all the reimbursement he obtained was payment for the shoeing of his horse.

The trouble over the vicar was not settled until May. When Dickinson failed to answer the summons from the standing committee of the West Riding, the matter was referred to a Mr. Clark who ruled that the vicar should have forty pounds and remain until summer and then preach no more.

With the expulsion of the vicar accomplished, Adam's functions resumed their normal, commonplace aspect. They were not important, but they could be used to fill up time and open byways of escape from husbandry. In errands for his neighbours he was in his element. He had profited from the friendliness of others, and in his turn he was only too glad to give of his time and interest. There were those in the community who could not write letters

for themselves or who needed to have documents drawn up and read to them. Men like Adam, Ralph Wordsworth, and Reginald Appleyard who knew their Dalton's *Country Justice* and had common sense in handling practical affairs could solve out of court many a difference between farmers, or between farmers and the men who worked for them.

Adam's friendliness was no more than natural in a community where neighbourliness was part of the yeoman code and expressed itself in many ways. People were all the time bringing one another small presents. If some of them seem a bit odd to our generation, there is no indication that they were not at that time gratefully received. Friends came with a piece of bacon or a pint of honey, and most extraordinary of all, Ralph Wordsworth's daughter turned up leading a sucking pig.

Often this neighbourliness required a little direction from a kind-hearted man like Adam. Take poverty, for example. It was customary for a hard-pressed labourer with a family to seek out some friend of local influence and ask him to take the initiative towards a help-ale. George Bray who had worked in the fields for Adam, and whose son went on errands for him, came to request Adam to be "a means to help him to some money, by an ale, or some other course." "I promised," wrote Adam, "to speak to his captain, Captain Rich, tomorrow." The relations of men to one another in the late parliamentary army still counted, and Adam bore that in mind when he was looking for some support for a help-ale. His neighbours, he knew, might be a little weary of solicitations to assist the poor, but it was hard for him to refuse, and he usually yielded to such importunities. "This morn," he wrote another time, "I went to Shore Hall and so through the nether part of the town to bid guests to an ale to Catchaw for Anthony Crossland the next Tuesday." Adam was able to raise

twenty-nine shillings for Anthony, having contributed one shilling, five pence himself.

There were always sick neighbours to be visited, while upon a death in a family the community responded sympathetically with presents and offers of help. When Dionis Micklethwaite died, Susannah Eyre went to call, taking with her a quarter of veal that would serve for the funeral baked meats. Upon hearing that Ellen Greaves was dangerously ill and like to die, Adam sent over to the family eighteen pence worth of ale which would be in good stead if there were to be a funeral; and when Ellen did die, Adam went to offer help. He was commissioned to go bid the Wordsworths to the burial, and set off at once on his errand, picking up the Greaves' greyhound for a bit of coursing on the way.

All these neighbourly exchanges and ministrations were fostered, of course, by everyday sociability. The friends with whom Adam foregathered missed few chances to come together. The essence of hospitality was never wanting, for almost every family made its own beer and served it when friends dropped in. More often these good puritans drank at the village alehouse, the men sometimes taking their womenfolk along and putting in the afternoon and evening together, or occasionally in the winter the whole day. Almost at the beginning of the diary Adam set down: "This day we appointed to meet at John Shawe's of Swinden-walls, with our wives, this day fortnight." Two weeks later Adam borrowed a horse "to carry my wife and myself to John Shawe's. . . . We stayed till night and then came home. . . . We met this day only to be merry." It was a laudable object even for puritan yeomen.

The group with whom Adam and his wife ate and drank at John Shawe's deserves examination, for their fellowship tells something about the community. They were John Wainwright, Richard

Wainwright, Edward Hinchcliffe, Thomas Earnshawe and Edward Mitchell and their wives, and Mrs. Rich.

John Wainwright made Susannah Eyre's clothes, worked by the day for Adam, did errands for him, furnished him once with tobacco and another time mended his boots. Yet Adam and he were once together at a help-ale at Hanbank, another time Adam went to John Shawe's alehouse "whither came John Wainwright, and I played the fool, and stayed there all night. God of his mercy forgive me." Richard Wainwright of Shore Hall was the most important of the Wainwrights and a well-to-do farmer. Edward Hinchcliffe of Bilcliffe helped to assess Penistone taxes, and Thomas Earnshawe was a constable. Edward Mitchell was the tenant at Haslehead. Mrs. Rich was presumably the wife of William Rich of Bullhouse, the large farm across the stream from Haslehead.

More evidence that these country folk on different economic levels were part of the same group of friends could easily be adduced. That one man did a day's work for another did not prevent his association, and that of his family, with the family of the man he worked for. Nor was service as a maid in a family looked down upon. John Micklethwaite of Birchworth farm was one of the circle of large farmers; his name was on petitions, he loaned Adam money. Adam reckoned him one of his closest friends and called on him repeatedly when John's wife, Dionis, who had cancer of the nose, was growing worse. One of the times when he dropped in to inquire about Dionis he asked John if he might have one of his daughters as a maid, and John promised him that he should, but explained that he could not spare her at the moment because of the illness of his wife.

There was nothing very surprising about all this. A lot of work had to be done, and each one in the community was expected to do what he could do best. The situation was not unlike what might be found today deep in the New England country. These

Yorkshire yeomen were not so much democratic as unimpressed by the differences between kinds of work.

It would be a misconception, however, to assume that these friendly villagers were generous in their financial dealings with one another. In paying wages, in buying and selling sheep, cattle and horses, they drove as close bargains as Yorkshiremen today. It is worth remark, too, that they seldom paid cash down. The system of credit seems to have worked fairly well. Adam paid off his friends as he could, and they paid him in the same way. But there was one difficulty that must have interfered seriously with transactions, and that was the general circulation of "light money." To judge from the diary, everyone including Adam was intent upon passing off such money on others. Francis Haigh loaned Adam fifty pounds and paid it over; there were twelve pounds of clipped money in it, which Haigh promised to receive back, if Adam "could not get it off." Adam seems to have been unskilful though not unwilling in that practice, and Francis had to make good to Adam by dribbling back the twelve pounds in easy payments. When a Wortley woman passed off a brass shilling on Adam, he kept it until he was going through Wortley again, but was unable to persuade her to take it back.

Adam was beginning to feel pinched for money. He was becoming more and more entangled in debt. There was always the hope in his mind that the government would pay what it owed him for army service. It was that hope that made him drift, that accounted for his failure to succeed in personal rehabilitation after the war. It was easy to ride or tramp around to visit his former companions-in-arms, many of whom lived only a few farms away. Each of them on his discharge from the parliamentary army had received instead of money small debentures on which was set down the sum due him. By virtue of his brother's death, Adam had fallen heir to Joseph's debentures, so that, with the money



he had earned himself, he was entitled to £1,794, no great fortune, but at the value of money in that day enough to make a Yorkshire yeoman independent. That fortune seemed just around the corner, and Adam can hardly be blamed for spending his hours and energy in discussing with his fellow soldiers how his money and theirs was to be collected.

The longer Adam nursed this hope, the more confused his simple affairs became. His discomposure threatened at length to afflict his domestic relations which had never been robustly romantic. Had he not been marking time, had he taken an interest in his crops and his flocks, had he saved money and added to his capital, had he been able to collect his money from the government, his wife might have approved of him.

Susannah Eyre was by no means the sympathetic and yielding creature that wives were expected to be in that time. The daughter of a neighbouring yeoman, she had been married to Adam now about seven years. She appears to have exercised an attraction over him, but it was an attraction that sprang from neither a warm heart nor a cheerful disposition. So far as we can make out from Adam's entries, she seems to have been a matter-of-fact woman who was able to look out for herself and her property, as well as Adam's, and to drive as hard a bargain as any of her countrymen. When Adam once tried to borrow two hundred pounds from her, probably on her expectations from her father, he was met with prompt refusal.

She was not only a perpetual negative to Adam's plans, but was given to complaint and moodiness. There was some excuse for her; she suffered a great deal with a sore leg. Adam calls her disease scrofula and had her sent once to be touched by the King, but there is some reason at least to suspect that her illness may have been syphilis. Whether this be true or not, she was ailing so often

and was so ill-natured that Adam found excuse for many trips away from home.

To be sure Susannah had no hard time of it. She was no doubt occupied with the cares of her house; she looked after brewing, kept chickens, and probably performed many other tasks not recorded. Most of the time she had a servant. Her husband bought tobacco for her, and saw to it that she had medical attention, and that in a day when physicians were a luxury, indeed an extravagance for a yeoman. She was spared what was a terrible burden in that time, child-bearing, though she may not have appreciated her fortune in that particular. And she had to an unusual degree for those days the companionship of her husband. On Sunday afternoons he would take her to Rainow Stones, a rendezvous on the moors. Not infrequently Adam took her with him on trips to the larger towns.

Even so Adam's hearth was no corner-stone of domestic bliss. When a difference did develop, he would write that his wife had begun to brawl and revile "after her old manner." But it was not until the summer after his trip to London that we notice all was not well between husband and wife. Susannah's nature and Adam's muddling of his affairs invited friction. The first difference seems to have been concerning the old topic, what the well-dressed woman should wear. Adam wished his wife to don only such apparel as was decent and comely, but he fails to tell us of what deviations from decency Susannah was guilty. On her part Susannah accused Adam of stepping on her sore foot. Adam took a firm line with his spouse. He told her that he intended to display no more outward signs of affection towards her until she obeyed him, adding in the diary with less bravado the hope that he might be able to follow this resolution, "that the folly of mine own corrupt nature deceive me not to mine own damnation." Evidently Susannah's physical charms prevailed over his intention to keep her in hand. By his

own account it was usually she that took the aggressive and had her way. "This day I stayed at home all day by reason my wife was not willing to let me go to bowls to Bolsterstone."

Troubles were brewing for Adam on his doorstep too. His tenant, Edward Mitchell, who had served under him in the wars, occupied part of Haslehead, perhaps the lower storey that looked out towards the farmyard. For a time indeed Adam had tabled, or boarded as we should say, with the Mitchells. The two families had been much together, probably too much; the men had ridden off on the same horse, the women had gone buying together. When Mrs. Mitchell was in labour, Adam had left the house, by way of courtesy, and had only returned when he was summoned back after all was over.

The first inkling of disagreement is given in the early pages of the diary when some difference arose about the tax assessment on Haslehead. Another quarrel led Mitchell to declare that neither Adam nor his wife should have aught to do in the house or grounds, nor should come near the fold-gate, "so peremptory and saucy is he grown."

As summer went on the tension increased. For a time it seemed that Mitchell might buy Haslehead, instead of leasing it, but finally the two men in the presence of witnesses agreed on the terms of a lease, which was to be drawn up by a third party. Adam maintained that he mentioned as part of the lease the repairing of the waterbanks along the river Don. The farm lay in the valley of the Don which was likely in flood time to encroach upon the fields, so that maintaining the fields against the water, making dams, and building sluices was part of the agricultural problem. It is evident that Mitchell, as he thought it over, did not wish to be held to repair the waterbanks, and that Adam believed that it had been understood orally that the said duty of repairing should be in the final text of the lease. It was not long after that Francis Haigh, a

friend of both men, informed Adam that Mitchell had spoken ill of Mistress Eyre, that he did not intend to mend the waterbanks, and that he wished a lease without covenants. For A to tell B what C had said of him was not against the code of the time; much of the trouble between Adam and Mitchell was caused by their chattering friends.

Adam was not happier when he learned that he could have leased Haslehead for five pounds more than he received from Mitchell. Nor was he pleased when Mitchell proceeded to lock the house door on him and his wife so that they could not go into the garden. Adam retaliated by reminding Mitchell of his duties in connection with the waterbanks and at length gave him notice to leave by Candlemas. To his friends he declared that he was ready to spend a year's rent to rid himself of his tenant.

By this time Adam must have been deeply worried. The Mitchell quarrel had been the last straw. We may guess that the opinion of his neighbours was beginning to concern him. He had something to lose there. He had held a respected place in a community that really depended upon him. It was he to whom the matter of the vicar had been referred; it was he to whom the poor appealed when they wished a help-ale given in their behalf; it was he who went round soliciting money when money had to be raised. Moreover, he had an honourable army record and was supposed to have money coming to him that could not but add to the esteem in which he was held. He was accounted honest and scrupulous in keeping track of his debts. In short he had a reputation to live up to, and he was possibly aware that the community was beginning to think less of him. He was so uneasy that he could not sleep.

It must be remembered that he had a puritan conscience and that he lived in a circle and belonged to a class that imposed certain standards. He could not but know that he had done a good deal to offend. An English yeoman was expected to be industrious.

Gentlemen might live as they pleased, yeomen in their hearts despised the idleness and thriftlessness of the class above them. John Earle in writing of the Plain Country Fellow declared: "He thinks nothing to be vices but pride and ill-husbandry." To be sure there was no harm in a game of bowls or an afternoon's fishing when rain interrupted the work in the fields. But if a yeoman took off too much time from the fields, his friends were likely to comment upon it. There was more, as Adam must have sensed, in the reckoning against him. He might drink a pot of ale or two with his neighbours, or even with the parson, and nothing would be thought of it. But when he abused himself with drink, as he sometimes admitted that he did, his friends would have approved no more than his own conscience. Part of the sin in their eyes would have been that he was spending more money than a yeoman should. It was by pennies that yeomen could hope to add acres to acres, or have money in hand to loan. Nor was there anything amiss about borrowing; neighbours were constantly borrowing or lending among themselves. But if the borrowing were all on one side, as it seemed to be now in Adam's case, there would be censure. It was the same way about his quarrels with his wife. There was pity for the man who had a sharp-tongued wife, but if he had other quarrels as well, there would be those to suggest that he was probably somewhat to blame.

One can look back upon Adam's unhappiness and understand it perhaps better than he could. His half days and whole days of resting at home, his visits to medicinal springs, his use of this and that remedy, show that he was in ill health. The restlessness and inability to settle down, his heritage from the war, was still on him; his ambition had been paralyzed by the delusion that a tidy amount of back pay would be along almost any time. As the hope of collecting from the government receded, the worry from mounting debts depressed him more and more. He was a driven

man. When we really consider his situation we need not wonder at his quarrels with his wife and with his tenant, nor at his frequent visits to the alehouse and his outbursts of temper. But a puritan in the seventeenth century was likely to believe, if things were going ill, that he was being tested by the Almighty with chastisement. He must plead with the Lord for strength to endure the fire through which he was being made to walk. He must pray often and engage in other religious exercises. And this is just what Adam did. As has been said, he was not a spiritual man, rather he was a practical Yorkshireman little given to meditation or metaphysical speculation. But something was wrong; he applied the only remedy he knew, which was to wrestle with the Almighty until the rough places were made smooth. After a sleepless night during which wicked thoughts entered his head, he rose and prayed to be directed aright. He went to his religious books, prayed again and then slept till morning quietly.

There was to be need that autumn and winter for long sessions both with the books and the Almighty. Many a night his sleep departed from him. Now and then he put a sentence in cipher into his diary, probably about his deep trouble. He tried to keep his mind on religion, but it was no use. "My mind as a stranger from God seems rather to wander through the many meanders of this terrene tabernacle, where no rest but continual perturbation is ever before, behind and round about me." He may have been dreaming of going to America. But the reality around him was not easily dismissed. Mitchell coming home late at night from the alehouse had been heard to say that he would be undone by two thieves, his landlord and Francis Haigh. Early in November Adam sued for a King's Bench writ against Mitchell, probably on the ground that he had not lived up to the terms of the lease. A few weeks later, after offering Mitchell another lease, he obtained a subpoena for Mitchell to appear in court. Spare moments he spent

in reading the first volume of Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* in which there seemed to be some anodyne for a wounded spirit.

Early in December Adam and Mitchell began to exchange notes, but to no purpose. At length they agreed to refer their difficulties to two of the neighbours, a customary way for country folk to save the expenses of litigation. Adam selected his friend William Rich to represent him, while Mitchell asked Ralph Wordsworth to stand on his side. Both of the arbitrators Adam trusted, and he believed that they might arrange a settlement. Adam and Mitchell bound themselves in a hundred pounds to accept the arbitrament provided it was made within thirteen days. All the men met at an alehouse. Each of the two stated his demands, there were drinks all round, and everyone went home. Such a matter could not be settled casually in one meeting.

Adam was sure that the Lord was now with him, and the harassed yeoman busied himself in rearranging his life. He counted up his expenses for the year, finding them to be about a hundred pounds, whereas his income had not been over thirty. He resolved not to treat anyone at the alehouse, nor ever to entangle himself in company as much as he had done. He went to his wife, begged her forgiveness for the past, and promised to be a good husband to her. Goodwife Eyre was consenting to reconciliation, but she did not let fair promises carry her too far nor her good business sense betray her. She consented to do what he wished, save in setting her hand to papers.

When the arbitrators proved unable, after two efforts, to reach an agreement, Adam had a writ served on Mitchell. Then ensued more open hostilities, each one shutting the doors of Haslehead against the other, like small boys. It was Mitchell who in turn resorted to the law and had Adam indicted for "words."

Adam was so discouraged that even a prolonged reading of the *Book of Martyrs* failed to ease his spirits. He rose on a Monday

morning before dawn to write letters and make plans for a trip to London, for he needed badly the fortification of his money from the government. It was balm to him when Anne Bray told him that Mitchell was full of trembling and would fain have an end. That night he slept better, and was further cheered to hear from the chattering Anne that Mitchell said he would bind himself in a thousand pounds to abide the verdict of honest men.

Naturally the neighbourhood was following the controversy. It was no doubt the liveliest topic since the matter of the vicar. John Mills fell in with Adam and told him that Mitchell had said in an alehouse that he would not have had Adam indicted if the latter had not served a process on him. On his way back from a trip to York Adam procured from the clerk of the session copies of the indictment that Mitchell had instigated against him. Soon after, the indictment and process were apparently dropped, and Adam and Mitchell in the presence of William Rich and Mr. Marsden signed a new lease with articles that seem to have been satisfactory to both. What was done about the waterbanks we are not told, but the victory was hardly Adam's. At any rate there was peace.

A careful reading of Adam's diary does not reveal him as a selfish or difficult man. In a dozen small ways he was generous to those around him. There can be little doubt that his neighbours would generally have put him down as too generous and considerate. He was not even a self-centred male who was sure of his own judgments. "I very well remember I never made vow in all my life but, through weakness and the power of darkness overruling me, I have most shamefully broken." On two occasions he had to whip his wife's servant, Jane Goodyer, a duty that often fell to the head of a household. There was pity in his mind for the poor creature, and he reflected to himself that his failings towards God were greater than those of Jane towards him, a conclusion that discloses a good deal about Adam.



From the time of his peace with Mitchell things began to go better with Adam. He took steps to have the ploughing done, while his man, Hadfield, was "graving" the garden and spreading lime. The references to sleeplessness and sciatica disappear. The second volume of Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* either had been finished or laid aside. Petitions to the Almighty and meditations upon the unsanctified state of his soul lessened as his earthly situation improved. He began to talk of going to London as if he were again hopeful that he might secure his pay on the debentures. On days when snow and rain made work in the fields impossible he took his fowling piece to kill a lapwing or a thrush, but fair days found him looking over his land with an eye to the spring planting. In 1577 Barnaby Googe had remarked that the best dung for the ground was the master's foot. By this token Adam's fields were well fertilized, for he was up and down his plots, now with his wife, now with a neighbour.

By the first of April he had all the oats in. The garden had been prepared earlier, during the last days of February, and by the eleventh of March he had planted the pease. Two days later he wrote: "We sew [sowed] parsnips and carrots in two beds in the garden." Early in April other seeds went in. "At night I sew mustard seed and turnips in the backside the garden." There are still farmers who hold that seeds sown at night by the light of the moon bring a greater fruitage.

With the planting done, the hedges laid and other repairs made, there was enough of a lull in the spring work to permit Adam to take his projected journey to London. He made the usual preparations, listed his debts and the sums due him, and deposited this list along with his will and "chief writings" in his box, which he sent to Reginald Appleyard. He saw to a few remaining tasks about the farm, put a few more seeds in the garden, and had little George Bray come to harrow the Broadfore field. So forehanded was he

that he had time, before setting out, to go fishing, as well as to see the youths play at football. On the fourth of April, praying this prayer, "Now the God of Heaven and earth be my speed and bless me and keep me out of the hands of wicked men," Adam set off for London.

He carried with him the certified statements about the debentures owing to him, his brother and his friends, fifteen in all. His own and his brother's amounted to over £1,700, but the other claims were for amounts ranging from £14 to £161. The record of this trip, a separate diary, has been lost, but evidently his hopes were again deferred, for he did not return until the middle of September and then with nothing to show for his trip.

Adam must have been discouraged. He set about trying to find a buyer for Haslehead and for Grimblecarr, a smaller piece of land belonging to him in Derbyshire. He even thought of returning to the army, having heard that one Colonel Mauleverer was looking for a captain for his dragoons, but such a move was dependent on the sale of the lands. Haigh, who already held a mortgage for a third of Haslehead, would have been glad to buy all of it but was unwilling to pay Adam's price. It would appear that Susannah did not wish to see the land sold, and however much trouble Adam had with her, he could hardly fail to respect her judgment. He himself, still hoping that the overdue money might be forthcoming from the government, may have been reluctant to close the bargain.

Fortunately for his peace of mind Adam could give his attention to the harvesting. The grain was cut the last of September. "This day my wife's father brought shearers out of Holmfirth, and share [sheared] in the Newfield; it was a very fair day." The threshing was begun a week after the grain had been cut. Adam did not comment on the yield which probably was not large. A high wind came and blew down some of the grain that was stacked in the

field; like all farmers Adam had to learn to accept the elements.

He interrupted his farm work to go to Penistone where Mr. Uxley and Mr. Clark preached at an "exercise" and "railed mightily." He had also to set about borrowing more money, a substantial loan that would see him through the winter. He approached Daniel Rich, his neighbour William's father, for £250, for which he promised the same security as he had given to Haigh, a third of Haslehead. There was no question as to Adam's honesty, the security was a good one, and he was able to achieve the loan on satisfactory terms.

That autumn Adam decided to stock the farm with a few sheep which could run on the moors during the autumn and winter. There was always a market for wool, even for the coarse wool which these sheep of the northern moors produced, and it would be a means of bringing in a little ready money in the spring. One day late in October Adam rode out and met Thomas Eyre on his way to the fair at Tideswell with a flock of likely-looking animals. Adam offered him seven shillings apiece for a hundred ewes, but Thomas, hoping no doubt to get more at the fair or afraid of being presented at the next quarter sessions for selling outside the market, refused, whereupon Adam followed him to Tideswell and bought the sheep at the price he had offered before. In addition he bought five rams at eleven shillings apiece.

From now on his interest centred in the sheep. Before the animals were sent out to the moors they had to be marked. Adam cropped the ears of his own and marked them with "fresh raddle on the near shoulder, a H on the far side." The sheep were hardy and could take care of themselves but, as accidents sometimes happened, Adam was constantly on the moors to see how they were faring. The last pages of the diary show that Adam was finally getting into his stride as a farmer. He had not given up hope of

collecting his military wages, but he was no longer relying on it. He was going to make Haslehead pay.

Adam's diary does not continue beyond January, 1649. It came to an end just four days before Charles I was executed, at a moment when Adam was on another journey to London. If the diary had gone on, the story probably would not have differed much from that already recorded. Oats would be sown in the spring and threshed in the autumn; sheep would be put to grass on the moors and grow as fat as tough Yorkshire grass could make them; trout would be caught each spring when the rains brought a rise in the Don; and conies tracked through the first November snows that fell on the moors. The parish leys would be collected, constables' accounts taken, the church windows reglazed, and Eyres, Haighs, Wordsworths, Riches and Appleyards would ride back and forth to church on Sunday and to help-ales and burials, to weddings and wakes, until their own time came to rest their bones beside those of their fathers in Penistone churchyard.

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## Brilliana Lady Harley

LADY HARLEY was so alive in her own time that we can imagine her as living in ours. She would probably have spent most of her married years in bed, resenting the weakness of a body that was not equal to its venturing mind, uttering her considered but vigorous views about religion and politics, reading quantities of newspapers and books, looking after her children even after they had left the nest, attempting in lady-of-the-manor fashion to guide the lives of those around her, and yet possessing such spirit and intelligence that we would forgive her anything.

It was better every way that she lived in the seventeenth century. In that time she became, with no heroic purpose, one of the heroines of the Civil Wars between King and parliament. If she has escaped the homage that is rendered to women brave in war, it is only because her story has to be pieced together out of scattered letters, and because the searchers after romance have been less interested in puritans than in royalists. It is to be said for Lady Harley that her fame with posterity would have concerned her less than her service of her God.

Yet there were few or none among the women of her time who furnish as good a story. It is a story that centres on a castle and comes to a head in a siege in a proper Sir Walter Scott manner. Lady Harley had foresight and courage, but she had more, a skill in procrastination that deserves to be remembered, and a sense of words and their arrangement that proved as useful as many swords.

All that story is in her letters, and a great deal else, the doings

of a large family circle. Those letters offer us as complete a picture of an English home in the seventeenth century as we are likely to get until the many manuscript volumes of the letter-writing families are published. It was a home of unusual parents and unusual children. From Brilliana we learn not only of all the Harleys and their retainers, but of Herefordshire and Shropshire in a time of crisis, how a remote community was behaving as war invaded its guarded routine. We pick up news about the Long Parliament and about the great Earl of Strafford.

Brilliana's castle was located in the narrow vale of the Teme under hills that rose within a half mile on either side. Downstream a few miles to the east, the hills drew back to give the vale a chance to widen out as it joined the valley of the Clun. The country is on the edge of Shropshire and looks like Shropshire. One is in the valleys of springs of rivers

#### By Ony and Teme and Clun

in a quiet backwater cut off even from the Cleve hills and Severn side, and very far from the bridges that Thames runs under. The castle where Brilliana lived was a small one, about forty feet by sixty, and, save for the towers, not very high. It seems to be higher, for it stands on the top of a mound above a deep moat. Today what ruins are left look down on the lawns and tennis courts of a country house still owned by Harleys.

Lady Harley was as wellborn as any great lady who wrote letters or stood a siege. The daughter of Edward Conway who was Secretary of State to James I and who became Viscount Conway, she was of the stock of the Grevilles of Warwickshire, the Tracys of Gloucestershire, the Nevilles of Westmorland, and the Verneys of Buckinghamshire. There was more than wealth and position in that heritage; there was intelligence, ingenuity and initiative. Her father had taken part with Essex at the sacking of

Cadiz and had served as Lieutenant-Governor of Brill. It was when he was at Brill that the daughter was born who was christened Brilliana. The next we know of her she was at the centre of negotiations between Sir Robert Harley of Brampton Bryan and her father. Towards the end of July, 1623, Brilliana wrote Sir Robert a short note of news and affection, and a few weeks later he and she were married so quietly that a cousin of Sir Robert's scolded him prettily because she had not been told whom he intended to marry. Sir Robert was forty-four, and had already buried two wives and ten children; Brilliana was nearly twenty-five; but such disparity in the ages of the two was not in that time deemed undesirable. Sir Robert's eagerness for a third marriage may perhaps be explained by his aspiration as a proper country gentleman to continue his line and by a saying of his that "husbands make the almanacs but wives the fair weather."

Sir Robert was one of the sturdiest of Herefordshire gentlemen. He gave his time unsparingly as justice of the peace or in attendance upon the assizes. He had to do with the forests of Bringwood, Mocktree and Prestwood, and he had a grant from the King of the fairs at Kingsland and Wigmore. These duties and the management of his estates left him little leisure for the ordinary pursuits of a squire. Only once do we hear that he had gone hunting, and then it was upon an occasion when he may have thought it his duty to take the younger sons away from their schoolbooks.

He had an active sense of duty. Among his neighbours he was marked as a devout puritan of the presbyterian type. Before setting out for parliament he would keep a day of fasting and prayer. He brought the most puritan clergy he could find to Brampton. "His planting of godly ministers and then backing them with his authority made religion famous in this little corner of the world." It was no wonder that the puritan clergy called him "as choice a piece as our age hath known." He was "animated with a most

nimble soul of zeal against sin." It was said that he used his power as a justice so effectively that "many thousand souls, prevented from their sinful sports, sat under the droppings of the Word." Neither in his household nor on his estates was swearing permitted. He demanded the strict observance of the Sabbath, he pounced upon images and relics wherever he found them. With all his zeal he was not a dour man; he would even smile at himself for being a plain puritan, and take it in good humour when his friends joked him about his religion.

To such a man Brilliana was a suitable wife. She shared without reservations the presbyterian faith of her husband. She believed in predestination and "the dear elect"; she was a careful student of Calvin and acquainted with the views of Luther. All books and tracts concerning religion were worth looking at, even the wrong opinions of the Jesuits. There was a kind of continental breadth about her, nothing of the narrowly Anglican. The ministers under whom she sat seemed to her sometimes superficial and even dogmatic. She took their measure quickly, but sought to look through the clouds of their infirmities upon the sunshine of their virtues. Her judgments were always her own; she was concerned to "know things experimentally." She was surprisingly tolerant, because the essence of religion was her relation to her God in prayer.

In other matters she lived compatibly with her husband. No doubt she approached him over a bridge of years and deemed him a trifle prosaic in his third and her only marriage. "I know you do not, to the one half of my desires, desire to see me, that loves you more than any earthly thing," she wrote him early in their married life. Like other women of her time she gave her husband devotion whether it was returned or not.

It was really rather loyalty than devotion that Brilliana gave her partner. Her letters to him do not indicate intimacy between



them or any long-standing correspondency of mind. In her epistles to her son she pours out the love of a warm-hearted woman, but in those same letters there is more than a hint of timidity towards her husband. She would ask Ned to withhold from his father some insignificant matter that she confided, or bid him persuade his father to do something. No word of complaint escaped her; she was punctiliously dutiful to Sir Robert as she had been to her father. She was not so much afraid of him as of herself lest she should do something that might cause him a shade of annoyance.

From her tone we might suspect that he was a man of a difficult disposition, but the few letters of his that remain show him always in a good humour, never unpleasant. Even when he quarrelled with a neighbour, it was with grace and wit. It is probable that he was simply lax in letter-writing. At Westminster he had to serve on many committees of the House of Commons, doing what he believed was the Lord's work, and domestic affairs had to be subordinated. It may be that he was one of those reserved Englishmen who say little, and thus without intent are able to command their wives and others.

There is not the least evidence of any quarrel between the two. Something did occur that moved Viscount Conway to take an elderly man-of-the-world attitude towards his son-in-law, and to twit the good puritan about carelessness in distinguishing his wife from his chambermaid. But if Brilliana knew of any such weakness, she kept it to herself. She was the "good wife who cares not how ill-favoured all men think her if her husband love her." When her son came to marry she hoped he would find a wife of a "meek and quiet spirit." She was herself loyal every day of her life.

She did her part in bringing children into the world; she bore her husband three sons, Edward, Robert and Thomas, and four daughters, Brill, Dorothy, Margaret and Elizabeth. In the few letters written in her early married life she was often about to

send for the midwife or in need of another cradle rug. But, unlike Alice Thornton, she seemed to take pregnancy and the prospect of confinement casually. To her great credit, all the children, unless possibly Elizabeth, lived to maturity.

Yet she was a woman of delicate health. Soon after her marriage she began complaining of an illness that never left her; for days and sometimes for weeks she was confined to her chamber, occasionally so weak that she had to dictate her letters to one of her children, and had barely strength enough to sign them. Dr. Deodate and Dr. Wright could do little for her except to give her cordials, let blood and keep her in bed. She hated staying in bed; it put her at such a disadvantage in the management of affairs, and she did like to manage them. Her lively mind was tormented by its confinement in a frail body. Undoubtedly her condition coloured her relations with her entire household; it made her feel more keenly her husband's long absences as she recalled wistfully how he used to come and sit in her chamber; it made her less entertaining for Ned, when he was home for a holiday; he could not but chafe at his mother's bedside, and be eager to be again at the University.

It is not to be assumed that Lady Harley submitted passively to her rôle of invalid and left her household to itself. Her mind was attentive to the duties of her position, and whenever she could escape from her room she was active in the performance of them. She packed parcels of food to send to Ned and to his father: pigeon pies, partridge pies, turkey pies, snipe pies, teal pies, pea chickens, runlets of meath, licorice and biscuit for Sir Robert to carry in his pocket. Sir Robert was inclined to scoff at her gifts to Ned, declaring that boys at Oxford did not like cold pie. Undismayed Brilliana merely varied the remembrances from home by shipping a baked loin of veal or a basket of apples in which nestled a copy of *The Return to Prayer*. She sent him trinkets as

well as food, a ring that had been his mother's keepsake, his grandfather's watch that would go well if he did not overwind it, a purse that was the first work of the new servant, Bletchley, with some pennies in it, that Ned might have something to give the poor.

In return for her attentions to Ned, Brilliana expected that her son would do errands for her at Oxford. He arranged with Mr. Nelham to draw his mother's petticoats. When he came home he brought a looking glass "that will make a true answer to one's face" and six blue and white fruit dishes to replace those that had been broken. Occasionally Ned was commissioned to buy books at Oxford because his mother had found them cheaper there than at Worcester.

To keep her large family provided with clothes was another task for the lady. The children and servants at home she could look after easily enough. But Sir Robert, moving from place to place, would send at a moment's notice for a cloak or a doublet and hose. When he went off to parliament, his trunk had to be packed and shipped in advance to Mr. Smith's in the Old Bailey.

Ned at Magdalen Hall needed constant attention. He must send his mother a shirt and socks so that she could use them as a pattern in making more. Half shirts and handkerchiefs had to be supplied to him regularly. As for outer garments, Sir Robert was of a mind that his son ought to dress soberly. Young Ned thought that sobriety could be carried too far, but his mother seemed to support her husband and wrote Ned: "It is very well done that you submit to your father's desire in your clothes; and that is a happy temper both to be contented with plain clothes and in the wearing of better clothes, not to think one's self the better for them; nor to be troubled if you be in plain clothes and see others of your rank in better." Ned lost this skirmish at home, but won an easy victory over his tutor, whereupon his mother showed her-

self no stickler for her husband's point of view. "I like it well that your tutor has made you handsome clothes, and I desire you should go handsomely." She was interested in his silk camlet and Spanish leather shoes, and enjoined him to be sure that his stockings were of the same colour as his clothes. In fact she bestowed upon him a cane and some powder for his hair.

One of her most difficult problems, handicapped as she was by illness, was the management of her servants. On her first arrival as a young wife, her presence had been resented by the old servants, no doubt the more because the young mistress knew her mind about what should be done. At one time she had written her husband that she had no one of judgment about her and asked his permission to bring in a gentlewoman who was reputed to be religious, discreet and very handsome in the doing of anything.

She was no hard mistress. The troubles of her servants and their illnesses absorbed much of her thought and care; their matchmakings were, of course, within her province. She did wish that young men would not marry so young. Her servants amused her sometimes, as in the case of the gardener who was sent to Oxford as a messenger to Ned, and fell so in love with travel that he would fain be sent again. For the sake of the servants she was willing to risk Sir Robert's displeasure, if circumstances warranted it. Elizabeth Bletchley had been dismissed because Sir Robert disliked the girl, but Bletchley came creeping back a few weeks later, when Sir Robert was away, groaning in an agony of conscience that she would be damned. For this condition Brilliana sent to Oxford to request the prayers of Ned's tutor, the seventeenth-century substitute for psychiatry. Bletchley seems to have remained thereafter at Brampton, giving increased satisfaction and nursing the children through serious illnesses.

Lady Harley's ministrations extended beyond her household to the tenantry. When Edward Pinner, rescuing his children from

fire, was overcome first by smoke and later by a fever, Brilliana summoned Dr. Wright to take care of him until he recovered. She concerned herself with expectant mothers and was often god-mother to the babies when they arrived. She kept an eye on the village schoolmaster who had the instruction of her younger sons and their cousin. She maintained an interest in George Griffiths, who served Ned partly as a manservant and partly as a companion. When young men were pricked at Hereford for the King's service, it was Lady Harley who comforted their wives.

But it was her oldest son who enlisted her closest attention. He had been the first-born male in a household where, though many children were in their graves, there was no heir. Viscount Conway hastened to compliment Sir Robert, as men will do, on Brilliana's safe delivery "with advantage of the sex." Ned was always to remain her favourite. Although she knew that lavish endearments were not considered good for youth, and although she inquired of his tutor whether she were too fond a mother, she made no real attempt to moderate her affections. "My life is bound with yours," she wrote him, and indeed it was.

We first make Ned's acquaintance, when at the age of fourteen, he was setting out for Oxford. He had received elementary instruction from the schoolmaster at Brampton, and had then been put to school in Gloucester and Shrewsbury. His father and mother sent their son to the University with the usual parental advice. Sir Robert warned him of "the base ways wherein many young men wallow." "I fear," he wrote, "the Universities do too much abound with such pigs." Brilliana was more temperate in her instructions. "You are now in a place of more varieties than when you were at home; therefore take heed it take not up your thoughts so much as to neglect that constant service you owe to your God. When I lived abroad I tasted something of those wiles; therefore I may the more experimentally give you warning." Sir

Robert, having uttered his counsel, was content to leave matters to time, tutor, and the Deity. Not so Brilliana. There was much she could yet do, and she intended to do it.

From her chamber at Brampton Bryan she stood guard over the health of her son at Magdalen Hall. At home she had nursed him through chincough, measles, and twice through smallpox. She had helped to get water out of him after a dumb woman had saved him from drowning in the moat. He was not robust, she knew too well, and she urged him to look after his diet, and to take regular exercise, but not too much, lest he tire nature. If he wished to swing, he should not swing too violently. Riding was excellent for young gentlemen. She observed that he cut wood for recreation, and that was good. Since his eyes were weak and subject to soreness she sent him an eyewash, together with a spiritual prescription, that "when by experience we feel how tender the eye is, we may call to mind how sensible God is of all the wrongs which are done his children, when he is pleased to say that they which touch his children touch the apple of his eye." Ned did not like medicines, but she supplied him nevertheless for any contingency with remedies she had tested in home use, not omitting to send a bezoar stone and aurum potabile. He should take beer boiled with licorice for his kidneys and should drink scurvy-grass (a mustard plant) pounded and strained with beer, to purge his blood.

She was equally interested in his spiritual state. Her letters overflow with exhortations to religious discipline. She understood that at Oxford they inveighed against the puritans. She would give Ned her opinion about pamphlets and sermons she had read, some to her liking and some by the papists. She exchanged opinions with him about Nicholas Coussin's *La Cour Sainte*, about the writings of Chillingworth, and of puritan divines like John Ball and Calybutte Downing.

Other books were discussed with him. At Ned's request Raleigh's *History of the World* was forwarded to Oxford. That work which unfortunately did not reach beyond scriptural times was the seventeenth-century equivalent of H. G. Wells's *Outline of History*. Ned had sent her Francis Godwin's *Man in the Moon*, which reminded her of Donqueshot (Don Quixote). She liked French books, "for I had rather read anything in that tongue than in English." She would quote Seneca to her son, as if, of course, he was familiar with it. She was probably better read than her husband, who was, no doubt, as versed in religious works as she, but possibly less acquainted with general literature. Her brother once twitted Sir Robert that in the Harley family the order of things was inverted: "You write to me of cheeses, and my sister writes about a good scholar." The word bluestocking had not been invented, but Brilliana would have been able to hold her own as a woman of reading with Dorothy Osborne or the Duchess of Newcastle. Had she lived long enough she could have taken her part in the intellectual circle that gathered round her niece-in-law, Anne, Lady Conway.

Brilliana urged her son to give close attention to political events. Although she was not enthusiastic about the election of her husband to the Long Parliament in 1640, and had once alluded to parliament as a body that spent much time in doing nothing, she was, nevertheless, interested in what happened at Westminster. Nothing her husband failed to do came so near to irritating her as his neglect to keep her informed of what was going on there. News of the political situation she gathered wherever she could, from letters or from those who had just returned from London; she was always begging Ned to write her all that he could find out. It was his duty to be aware of important happenings and to ponder on their meaning. Of course he had to be careful, she realized, what he put in letters, for puritans were so easily mis-

understood. Not only domestic affairs, but foreign were included in her curriculum for her son. Her father had written to her husband of her: "My daughter, born in a strange land, the daughter of an ambassador and a counsellor, will be out of countenance, if you be not able to know what the neighbour princes do, and what we think to do."

It must not be supposed that this political woman was inattentive to the things that usually attract feminine notice. She liked tid-bits about the Queen Mother, who was so transported at the sight of her daughter, Henrietta Maria, that she arrived in a trance. She was touched to hear that the Queen had gone to bed in sorrow when Charles left London for his journey to York. She was equally concerned with the details of the people in her own part of the country, indeed more concerned. It was important that the heir to the house of Harley should not be ignorant of what was done in his own county, and she did not fail to inform him. The welcome news that one of Lady Harley's nieces was marrying into the county, the scandal of Sir Gilbert Cornwall's suit against his sisters, the appointment of provost marshals to ride about the country and drive away rogues and idlers, the excitement during the King's expedition against the Scots—all such bits were retailed to Ned that he might keep abreast of affairs against the time when he should assume his place in the county.

That Ned had a place in the county, his mother did not allow him to overlook. He was to respect his position and to take it with assurance but not with undue pride. To assist Ned in the mystery of the proprieties, Brilliana sent him a letter which he was to copy and post to Lady Conway as from himself. When Mr. Scudamore was on his way to visit Ned, Brilliana advised the young student that he must receive his visitor with all respect. "But in the entertainment of any such be not put out of your-



self; speak freely, and always remember that they are but men; and for being gentlemen, it puts no distance between you, for you have part in nobleness of birth, though some have place before you, yet you may be in their company." Lady Harley was explaining the good old English principle of democracy within the upper classes.

Had Brilliana lived she would have considered herself compensated for her pains with Ned. He became the sort of man she hoped he would be. Resolute in his puritan faith, colonel in the parliamentary army, but willing to brave the anger of rulers in London rather than to support the last measures against the King, Governor of Dunkirk, several times a member of parliament, he took his place among the competent men of his generation. In his various offices he served with such integrity that even Charles II lamented that he was such a notorious presbyterian. Withal he lived simply, shunning honours, and the offer of an appointment as a Privy Councillor. The estate of Sir Henry Lingen, one of the leaders in the siege of Brampton Bryan Castle, was sequestered and turned over to Ned in satisfaction of the losses the Harley family had sustained in the wars. Ned ordered an inventory of Lingen's estate, submitted it to Lady Lingen, asked her if it was correct, and then presented it to her, relinquishing all claim himself. That kind of high-minded generosity was rare in the seventeenth century, or in any century.

Brilliana deemed herself less successful with her son, Robin. She had left nothing undone in nursing him through a precarious childhood, but never grew fond of him. To Ned she could say: "You are my well-beloved child," but for Robin she had other words. He was stubborn, he was apt to apprehend unkindness, he came little to see her save when she summoned him, and he did not care how things went in parliament. Tom, the youngest son, pleased her better. "Tom is as busy as can be about the

parliament and holds intelligence with all that will give him true notice of things."

But Robin turned out rather well. From the time that he enlisted in Ned's troop in the army, he proceeded to belie all her expectations. He took to his pen, like a true son of Brilliana, and wrote a detailed and amusing description of the battles of Cheriton and Winchester, poking fun at the Londoners, who ran to see what manner of things cows were. He served with distinction in the war and followed his father and brother into disfavour rather than support the policy that led to the execution of the King. Throughout his life he participated in public affairs and was responsible for much of the administration of Dunkirk that went to Ned's credit.

The youngest brother, Tom, although he became an agreeable and entertaining young man, never figured in public affairs as his brothers had done.

The girls of the family are hardly ever noticed in Brilliana's letters unless when ill. Brill, the oldest, was the only one to receive occasional mention. Even then there are but flashes of her—a little girl attending one of the private days of prayer of the family, substituting as godmother when Lady Harley was too ill, or slipping a letter to Ned in with her mother's. Her early letters to her brother bear the marks of supervision, but eventually they grow more natural and deal with the new cook or the tinker who killed a maid. Ned would often send her a token, a silver thimble or some such gift. Once he sent her a chine of herring, and Lady Harley laughed at Brill's disappointment. Once only was Ned angry with her, and that was when Lady Harley had a miscarriage, and Ned thought that Brill had not informed him quickly enough. She defended herself warmly, but it was more than a week before she could get a letter with a "spark of love in it."

When Brill was twelve her father decided that the time had come when she ought to take residence in the household of some worthy lady, for such was the finishing school of young women of quality. Sir Robert informed Lady Harley that he proposed to place their daughter with Brilliana's aunt, Lady Vere, in London, which delighted Brilliana. There was not a wiser or better woman among her acquaintance.

It was a year before the arrangements were completed. In May, 1642, just after her thirteenth birthday, Brill was off, accompanied by the faithful Pinner, Cousin Hackluyt and others, and was met at the Catharine Wheel in High Wycombe by Ned, who escorted her to Lady Vere's house. Ned was instructed to watch over his sister, and Lady Harley did not omit to give her counsel, especially about the performance of religious duties.

But Lady Harley was nearly to forget her daughter in the events that followed. During Ned's first months at Oxford she had warned him that they must look forward to days of trouble, but when Sir Robert went down to the opening of the Long Parliament, stopping at Oxford to take Ned with him to London, Brilliana had expected no more than stiff political conflict.

Meanwhile she cautioned Ned to improve his time in London; it was such a bewitching place. When Ned decided to remain in London—the infection was bad in Oxford—and enter one of the Inns of Court, she approved. Lincoln's Inn was ultimately selected, which contented her until she heard that he was lodging in a lane nearby rather than in the Inn itself. "Those lanes were the unsweetest places in London and always the sickness is in those places. I could wish you had rather been in the Temple or Gray's Inn." But in London he was at any rate, and must give her the latest news of parliament. He must begin his letters on Monday and take the whole week to write them, telling her who were the important men in the House and how each conducted himself.

The Speaker's speech at the opening, the petitions to and the answers of the King, the charges against Strafford, all the parliamentary documents found their way into Herefordshire—she let nothing escape her and kept calling for more. "Let me hear the truth of things, though it be bad," she wrote to Ned at a moment when affairs looked gloomy.

But there was much to encourage her in the early days of the Long Parliament. She listened to the apothecary just back from London, as he described a gala day when Prynne and Burton, who had lost their ears and their freedom for their outspoken puritan writings, were welcomed back into the city by a vast procession of horsemen and coaches and citizens decked in rosemary. Lady Harley read the articles against Strafford, and they proved to her that parliament was proceeding happily. Cousin Priam Davies believed that Strafford would never be sentenced, but his view was not shared by the lady of Brampton Bryan. Strafford's execution in May of 1641 was good news. He died like Seneca, she had to admit, but not like one that had tasted the mystery of godliness. His downfall should be only a beginning. What she was really waiting for was that parliament should get down to business about the bishops. "I am glad that the bishops begin to fall; and I hope it will be with them as it was with Haman."

The death of Richard Weaver, member of parliament for Hereford—Brilliana had been watching his illness—gave an opportunity for that arranging instinct which was never wanting in Lady Harley. Why should Ned not be elected in his place? Dr. Wright, the family physician and retainer, was only too willing to help her in electioneering. Letters were sent off at once and Ned was urged to interest his father in the proposal.

It was a mistake upon the part of Lady Harley. She had failed to estimate the strength of feeling in Herefordshire against the puritan party in parliament and thus against the Harleys. Ned

was only eighteen in any case and had no right in the House of Commons. His father, who was probably not aware of the increasing sentiment against the puritans in the county, did realize that his son's candidacy would be resented by the important families in the county, and Brilliana was forced to give up her scheme.

The news about the King did not please Brilliana. She was careful to write of him respectfully, but she was sorry that he did not conceive better thoughts of parliament; he was, she judged, in need of guidance. It was true of many, as Brilliana was aware.

Then one Saturday night in January, 1642, Herefordshire heard stories that members of parliament had been accused of treason. It will be remembered that the King had suddenly ridden down to Westminster to arrest Pym and four other members of the Commons, and, marching with armed followers into the Commons, had found the birds flown. Brilliana thought of her husband naturally as one of the leaders of the House—he was an active member but hardly in the second string of leaders—and feared his imprisonment. When she learned the names of the members whom Charles had planned to arrest for treason, she was relieved to find that her husband's name was not among them. Yet as things grew worse from week to week, she began to see the grim meaning of it all. "I fear there will be blows struck," she wrote.

At home she had much to think about; local affairs were becoming more topsy-turvy every day. Parliament had set off the factions and now rumour raced through the countryside, setting cottage and castle in a flurry. The puritans were worried; they feared that the King might be in league with the Catholics, and that there might be a Catholic rising like that in Ireland in 1641. They were on the lookout everywhere for conspiracy. It was said that at Sir Basil Brooke's as much meat was dressed daily as three cooks could make ready, and yet it was not known who

ate it. No less a papist than Tobie Matthew, it was reported, was visiting at neighbour Plowden's, and what could that mean but danger?

While puritans were concerned, cavaliers were awake. Old friends of the Harleys, like Sir William Croft, Sir Henry Lingen, Fitzwilliam Coningsby and Wallop Brabazon joined with other justices of the peace in refusing to take the protestation demanded by parliament.

Of course the clergy were excited. If the puritan ministers prepared a petition against the hierarchy of the church, the Laudian clergy mocked and countered with one in support of the bishops, sending addresses of loyalty to the King. Puritans complained that Dr. Rogers and Mr. Sherborne turned their pulpits into stages where they roused the gentry into action for the King and castigated the puritans. Mr. Gower, Sir Robert's handpicked presbyterian vicar at Brampton, reported the situation to Sir Robert: "On the one side papists that erect their babel among us; on the other side Brownists that discourage your reformation of our Zion, whilst they contend for their independent government." Mr. Gower and his brethren were not confounded by the babel; they themselves began to "speak in God's dialect," and to flay the universities for their impieties; they clamoured for the overthrow of the bishops. "Down with them and the abbey lubbers, our cathedral men that serve the choir. They are useless to the church, usurpers of the revenues, and the devil's proctors to uphold antichrist."

Church services were demoralized. One could no longer be certain what would happen. Mr. Davis, another of Sir Robert's picked vicars, went to Hereford to preach and found his audience restive. Fearing that he could not hold the listeners he made the prayers short, but when he was reading his text, two of the congregation began to shout "Pray God bless the King." Davis tried

to explain that he had taken the liberty, as did many divines, to pray for the King and Church after the sermon. But the people rushed out crying "Roundhead," threatening to stone him, and began to ring the bells. In the afternoon he was refused permission to conduct the services and withdrew into the cathedral where he could hear the mob outside denouncing him.

By June and July of 1642 parliament and the King were both arming as rapidly as possible. Herefordshire and Shropshire were not at war as yet, but the excitement among all classes of people was mounting. At Ludlow and at Croft the people set up a may-pole with a thing like a head on it, gathered round the pole and shot at the head in derision.

Local government was becoming confused; some officials were endeavouring to carry out the King's orders, some were obedient to parliament, and one under-sheriff maintained that he would respect the orders of both King and parliament.

The prevalent disorder was affecting the soldiers. The old trained bands were at sixes and sevens. Some of the officers had gone to join the King; some had taken what men they could persuade to follow them and had departed to support the parliament. Brilliana observed that one of her husband's former servants had been made a captain in the King's army. Groups of soldiers, often without a responsible officer, moved about seizing horses and arms, and now and then perpetrating outrages. Those only were safe who could defend themselves.

The commotion of the county could not but affect Brampton Bryan. When Sir Robert sent for the family plate, it was no great shock to Brilliana. At first she resisted and advised her husband to borrow money, offering to see what she could raise in Herefordshire. But upon his insistence that the plate be sent up, she packed it carefully, told the carrier that it was cake, and sent it off to London. Just for appearances she retained several articles.

"I should have sent the basin and ewer and salt, but that I thought it would dishearten them [at Brampton Bryan] to adhere to the parliament less than if they must part with all."

She had much else to do. In her husband's absence she was forced to deal with farm problems, rents and renewals of leases; it was no time at all before tenants were refusing to pay their rents. They had indeed some colour of excuse, declaring that Sir Robert was himself in arrears to the King for his rent on certain crown lands. Lady Harley struggled to hold his estates together, rather expecting that in some way Sir Robert would be giving orders, as he had always done. Instead he let it be known that he was annoyed that he had not received the rents. Lady Harley did her best for him. She availed herself of Pinner, the tenant whom she had befriended before, to help her make out the rent rolls and to act as steward. "I did what I could, and so will do still," wrote the harassed lady to her husband.

But the increasing hostility alarmed her. Good old Petter, long attached to the family, was jeered at when he entered Hereford and was called a fresh Roundhead. "It has very much troubled me," she wrote to Ned, "to see the affections of this country so against your father that is worth thousands of them." Lady Harley might be all for the rule of parliament, but she indulged herself in no nonsense about the equality of mankind. In the growing tension the common man was having his say about disloyal gentlemen, and Lady Harley was amazed at his bitterness.

As early as March, 1641, she had begun to have doubts about the possibility of holding the castle. If there should be stirs, she had written her husband, Brampton in respect of worldly help was very naked. In the late summer of that year Sir Robert had come home for a spell, and on his return to London, had left Ned at Brampton. By November of that year Lady Harley reopened the subject in a letter to Sir Robert informing him that she had



provided bullets according to his direction, but she had only two men in the house. Would it not be better to go to Shrewsbury, for example, or to some large town, where in the event of a papist rising, there would be means of defence? It was her judgment that Brampton would not stand a siege.

When Ned returned to London, Sir Robert did take the precaution of ordering some bandoleers and muskets to be shipped to Brampton, but the muskets were intercepted.

In June of 1642 when both King and parliament were arming, and when Herefordshire was on edge, Brilliana wrote to Ned that she did not feel herself in safety and wished to be in London. But both Ned and his father advised against her coming. For some reason they did not believe she could stand the unhealthy conditions of the city, and besides neither of them believed that the gentlemen of Herefordshire would allow any personal harm to come to her. They were used to gentle families that stood by one another, and they did not realize that the old loyalties were breaking down. Brilliana accepted the decision bravely. "Since your father thinks Herefordshire as safe as any other country, I will think so too . . . I will lay aside that desire." Lady Harley was a manager, but she yielded at once to her menfolk.

When the King called out the militia in July of 1642 Brilliana sent for instructions. "I am not afraid, but sure I am, we are a despised company," she informed Ned. The rumour was that the King would soon have an army in the county, and that within six weeks the shire would be rid of all puritans. Should she go abroad with friends for a time? Sir Robert must have replied as before; in a few days Brilliana wrote that, if he wished, she would stay.

It was growing harder for her every day. One of her servants had been in Hereford and had found people there so rude that he had not dared confess what household he served; he had heard

men snarling at the mention of Sir Robert's name, boasting that if they had him they would tear him in pieces. Neighbour Crowden warned Brilliana that she ought to leave the country. Cousin Adams was acting so suspiciously that Brilliana wished he were out of the house.

Lady Harley warned her husband and son to keep clear of the county. Sir Robert, she feared, had no idea what went on; no one would give him a true relation of conditions; no one would protect her. If she must stay at Brampton Bryan, let Sir Robert send some religious, understanding man to take charge. "Do not take this," she wrote, "as if it arose from a distracted heart, . . . take all as from a wife that will most willingly do what you will have me do."

She was not afraid, she protested, but the enemies of God had the upper hand, and she needed directions how to carry on the "dutiful, sober means" of which Sir Robert had spoken. Two days later she made up her mind that she had to stay. "Now I have well considered, if I go away, I shall leave all that your father has to the prey of our enemies, which they would be glad of, so that and please God, I purpose to stay as long as it is possible, if I live, and this is my resolution without your father contradict it. I cannot make a better use of my life, next to serving my God, than to do what good I can for you." For the preservation of Ned's heritage, she was willing to go through much.

Powder, match and bandoleers she found she had, but no muskets. She could not procure shot, because none could make that but those whose trade it was; therefore the plumber had to be approached to write a letter to Worcester for fifty weight. While she waited for her ammunition and her enemies, Brilliana worked out a plan of defence and submitted it to Sir Robert. "I would make choice of twenty of the honestest and ablest men that are servants, or their sons, about Petherton, Buckton, and

Walford, to be in readiness, if they hear the drum beat, to come to Brampton. . . . I would oblige them to me by some kindness. If you do not like it, set me down another plan, for I have so few servants, and I think that if I should sometimes invite your tenants and neighbours about me, it might make them more tractable." A little later in the first week of August, 1642, Ned arrived and remained with her until December.

Among all these worries and disorders Brilliana grasped at ordinary details and routine as if she hoped they might help her to ignore the stark reality about her. She experimented with a new cook, but "he was so naught" that she had to let him go. A niece needed to have a marriage arranged; so did Hackluyt, Brilliana's cousin and lady-in-waiting, who would make a satisfactory wife for Sankey, another servant. It could all be arranged. In London bishops were falling, the Lord say amen to it, but in Herefordshire old Mrs. Hubbins had gone to live with her daughter. Dr. Wright might be arming against the papists, but Lady Newport was having the bells rung at Shrewsbury for a wedding in the family. Little Peggy put her knee out of joint and, since no bone-setter could be found near Brampton, had to be carried to Coventry for treatment. Brilliana's sister, Helegenwagh, better known as Wacke, died, and Brilliana was without so much as a mourning gown. One could no longer send to town these days, that is, to Hereford. There was nothing to do but to dispatch a shopping list to Sir Robert, who must have been surprised in the midst of parliamentary committees by his wife's commission to find not only a grogram suitable for mourning, but to have Brill make her a silken gown of cheap stuff, without lace, of my Lady Vere's measure for bigness.

Then there were the boys and their young cousin, Smith. They simply had to have a man to wait on them. Accordingly Ralph of Cheshire, an honest man who would wait on them for his diet

without wages, was taken into the household. Some of the village youngsters, practising at insurrection, shut the schoolmaster, Mr. Balham, out of school. That was straightened out, but now Mr. Balham was sick, and Brilliana was not sorry to see him retire to Oxford. A schoolmaster, however, had to be found, and Sir Robert would not say what she was to do about it. Her own boys, Robin and Thomas, were well enough prepared to go to the University, but their cousin was another matter. She experimented with having the boys learn Latin at home, but, dissatisfied with the results, sent them to school at Llanvair Waterdine, but had to bring them home presently, because they had no food but salt meat.

There were a dozen other problems that kept her busy. Suddenly she realized that she was shaking off the illness that had kept her incapacitated for years. The more exciting conditions became, the more her health improved. It looked as if a Civil War was what the physicians should have prescribed for her long since.

If only she had a coach, Brilliana decided she could go riding a little to take the air. This idea she relayed to Sir Robert through Ned. What he said we do not know, but he may have thought it strange that his wife contemplated buying a coach when she could not collect the rents, and put it down to feminine idiosyncrasy. Perhaps the good lady had a notion that a coach would be convenient in case she had to make an escape.

From the time of Ned's arrival in August, 1642, Brilliana became steadily more occupied with the approach of the war to her home. Sir William Croft, whose friendship with the Harleys had chilled with events, called on Lady Harley to inform her privately that his attitude towards her was as always, but that publicly he would show no favour. With a certain assurance Lady Harley suggested to him that the consignment of arms she had been expecting might be delivered to her, but Croft told her that people thought she had more arms than she needed for her own defence

and feared that she was distributing weapons to the supporters of parliament.

Meanwhile an anonymous letter warned Lady Harley to prepare speedily for her own safety. "The danger is near and great," read the message. "There are some good parts in you which I am sorry should perish altogether." Immediately she took men into the castle at threepence a day with meat and drink. Since she believed that the royalists would choose a Sunday on which to make a surprise attack, she proposed to hold Sunday services in the castle. Ned and Mr. Gower opposed this slight to the Lord, but the lady was determined to stand guard at all times, including the Lord's day called Sunday.

The situation was not hopeless. Parliamentary forces were not far away. The Speaker of the House of Commons had issued a warrant for the arrest of Croft, Coningsby and others who had been active in Herefordshire. It must have cheered her much when parliament at the request of the Earl of Essex, who had been made lord lieutenant of Herefordshire, sent Sir Robert Harley and other members of the Commons to survey the situation in Herefordshire. Sir Robert spent a few weeks in an attempt to organize the local government under officials favourable to parliament, and in raising supplies and men for the parliamentary forces. Exactly what measures he took for Brampton Bryan we cannot tell, but he seems to have secured muskets in place of the lost consignment, as well as stores of food for the castle. When he left the castle in December, 1642, he must have judged that Herefordshire was going to be more under the control of the righteous than it turned out to be, and that Lady Harley was sufficiently fortified to take care of herself. Soon after he permitted Ned to return to the parliamentary army.

He had misjudged the situation. Before Christmas Brilliana had a taste of things to come. The Marquis of Hertford with some

troops headed towards Brampton. On the way he received sudden orders to go elsewhere, but sent Lady Harley his regrets, bidding her fear those who would come after. Fitzwilliam Coningsby, royalist governor of Hereford, let it be known that within five days he would be at Brampton for an attack.

Meanwhile he took other measures; he attempted to prevent everyone from dealing with Lady Harley. The miller at Aymestrey was forbidden on pain of death to pay rent; the fowler was not allowed to furnish poultry; some of Brilliana's colts were driven away. In mimicry of the parliamentary phrase the royalists gave out they would not leave Sir Robert root or branch.

"I did not think," wrote Brilliana, "there had been any such natured men in the world. . . . I have my health and so have the children, and we have yet, I thank God, meat to eat, but not thanks to the gentlemen." "They say I am a good lady, but it is for your sake and your children's that they do so, which words are bitter to me." Brilliana had been accustomed to a great deal of kindness and courtesy from the neighbouring families, and to find them now leading an attack against her surprised and hurt her.

Brampton was now virtually a prison. No one dared to go farther than the cow pasture. Early in February of 1643 the royalists decided to bring up a rooking trench and blow up the castle. Before that plan could be carried out, Lord Herbert was sent off to the Forest of Dean, and Lady Harley took advantage of the respite to have the moat filled with water.

In the meantime the royalists obtained indictments against Sir Robert, Ned, Mr. Gower (the vicar of Brampton) and others. Mr. Gower and some of the others who were indicted had taken up their residence in the castle. Thus Brilliana could be charged with sheltering culprits.

On the fourth of March, 1643, Captain Baskerville and ten trumpeters presented Brilliana with a formal summons from Fitz-

william Coningsby in the name of the King to surrender the castle. Brilliana replied, carefully avoiding the use of the word *castle*, that by the laws and liberties of the kingdom she had as good a right as anyone to what was her own, that therefore she refused to surrender her house. A copy of the summons she posted to Ned and to her husband, writing to Sir Robert: "For what they lay upon me as being your wife, I think it more happiness to me, if I did suffer all that man can lay upon me, in being your wife, than if I were the wife of any man breathing and did enjoy all the pleasures of this world. This I cannot but say, because I am likely to suffer. Dear Sir, be not too much troubled for me or your children."

Lady Harley had her case clearly in mind. It was her own house she was defending, and she had done ill to none. True she had been loyal to the puritan faction in Herefordshire, but she had not participated or encouraged a single act against those who avowed themselves to be her enemies, except to do what she could to protect her servants. That she had equipped four men to serve as soldiers under Ned was possibly a point against her that she had forgotten. They were not fighting in the county. She had no desire, she had informed some of the leaders of the gentry, to harm those whose belief differed from hers. All she asked was to live quietly at Brampton.

Yet she was getting ready for eventualities. She wrote her husband that she still had the men she had taken into the house, such as Dr. Wright, who had moved in months before and declared that he was going to stay until Lady Harley was out of danger, and the Reverend Mr. Gower, who showed no disinclination to do battle if the need arose. There were other worthies in the castle including cousin Priam Davies and Mr. Yates, one of Sir Robert's good puritan vicars, as well as a soldier who had fought in the German wars and had been dispatched by Colonel Massey of the

parliamentary army to direct the defence of the castle. If only she had money for corn and meal, she thought she could hold out even with three shires against her.

All this in March. May and June of 1643 saw nothing happen, save that Lady Harley was cut off from her estates and from any regular source of supplies. Royalist soldiers whom Lady Harley referred to as the "old friends that were there before," moved in and out of neighbouring villages. Towards the end of June she thought she saw signs of an onset and took stock of her provisions which were holding out well.

On the 26th of July the tardy enemy arrived and opened the siege with a pomp only a little less than that of opening of parliament. Four hundred horse and three hundred foot soldiers under command of Sir William Vavasour took position at the east of the castle and at the south on Pinner's Hill. In the evening a trumpeter appeared to deliver the summons to surrender, in the name of Henry Lingen, High Sheriff of Herefordshire, who with Sir Walter Pye and William Smallman, sent a message to Brilliana. They had no desire, they said, to inconvenience the lady, but Sir William was under command from the King to reduce the castle. If she surrendered quietly, she could have conditions fitting one of her quality; otherwise she might expect no quarter.

Brilliana answered that she refused to believe the King, having sworn to maintain the laws and liberties, had given any such command to take away her house.

The next morning the royalist forces moved into the village and took possession of everything outside the walls of the castle. For two days desultory shots were exchanged, and then Vavasour resorted to the pen. He regretted that a lady of such wisdom and virtue had refused the reasonable demands upon her. Although he intended to discharge the respect due to her sex and honour, he



could not answer for her safety if the soldiers were any longer provoked by her obstinacy.

From these early letters it is plain that the royalist gentlemen desired the castle, not because it was of great military value, but as a gesture against Sir Robert, whose prominence in opposition to the King deserved official punishment. Vavasour had written to Prince Rupert: "I found that I had been lost in the opinion of these counties, neither should I get half the contribution promised me, unless I made an attempt upon Brampton Castle, Sir Robert Harley's [Herloes] house." The royalist leaders anticipated no great trouble in their attack; they were dealing with an invalid; a mere show of force would be sufficient to bring her round.

Now that her enemies confronted her, Brilliana was comparatively tranquil. As for warfare with the pen, nothing suited her better. Her answer to Vavasour was prompt. She was ignorant of any demands made by the gentlemen. They had sent soldiers to her house to reduce it. She had heard such fair reports of Vavasour that she thought it strange that he should allow his mind to take up false rumours against her. She had never tolerated anyone in her house who had committed theft or murder; nor were there any rebels in her house. Would Vavasour be so kind as to recall the soldiers who had been shooting at her house and raiding her cattle?

More cattle were driven away while Vavasour composed his reply. He told her that her cattle had been merely taken into custody; and as for shooting, her own musketeers had opened fire and had killed a little boy.

Brilliana answered that his soldiers had come as professed enemies, had been warned to keep off, and had been finally shot at as a defensive move. She followed this message with another requesting permission to write to her brother-in-law, Sir William Pelham, that he might obtain a pass for her to go away in safety.

Whether she really intended to make use of a pass is difficult

to say, but from her subsequent conduct, it seems clear that she was playing for delay, no doubt in the hope that parliamentary forces would come to her assistance. In any case she rejected Vavasour's offer of protection, if she would lay down her arms. Her husband, she assured him, had entrusted her with his house.

Brilliana and Vavasour continued to argue the question as to whether it was disobedience for her to refuse to admit soldiers, until Vavasour suddenly decided to throw aside the pen and take up an actual military assault.

The cavaliers threw up breastworks whence they kept up a casual fire with muskets and hammer-guns. Heavy ordnance was set up at favourable positions to pound the walls of the castle. One of these pieces was affectionately known among the besiegers as Roaring Meg, and when a few days after Meg blew herself to pieces, the besieged gaily saluted her demise. The outbuildings of the castle were burned, and later the parsonage, the mills, and most of the village.

The one hundred men, women and children in the castle, including fifty musketeers, had come through the battering better than they had hoped. Not one had fallen ill. They had to grind the corn for their bread in a hand-mill, but they managed it all somehow. Brilliana moved among them exhorting them to courage, for the enemy was now in earnest. She presided at the councils of war within the ramparts. She arranged for "secret intelligence," not only of the enemy, but of the parliamentary armies, which she hoped would soon come to her rescue.

For some time the hostile fire did little beyond toppling chimneys, making a breach in the wall, and smashing the Venice glass in the high tower. But at length a shot was sent through the window, shattering the wall and breaking the bell, a piece of which caught Lady Colbourn and put out her eye. The cook was hit in the arm by a bullet and died.



BRILLIANA LADY HARLEY



But the battle was taking longer than the cavaliers had expected. To speed things up the besiegers schemed to fire the castle with grenades. Brilliana discovered the plot and sent ten men from the castle to destroy the buildings where the grenades were being prepared. The ten put the four hundred into a panic, according to the puritan historian of the siege. More probably the besiegers were simply agape at the audacity of the move.

On August 23rd, a drum was beaten at the castle gate to signify that a parley was desired. A messenger from the King, Sir John Scudamore, who during the rest of the negotiations acted as ambassador to the court of Lady Harley, requested that he be allowed to deliver his Majesty's letter. Brilliana sent a messenger to receive the letter. The King informed Lady Harley that he had been told that Brampton Bryan Castle was a receptacle of rebels who terrorized the country, set fire to houses, and committed other outrages. His Majesty rather preferred to believe that Lady Harley had been seduced by evil counsel than that she entertained ill affection towards him. As he did not desire to use force against one of her sex and condition, he had sent Sir John Scudamore to demand the immediate surrender of the castle. If she admitted Vavasour's soldiers he assured her of pardon for her offences; otherwise she must thank herself for ruin and destruction that must inevitably follow.

Brilliana at once notified Scudamore that she desired to send a petition to the King, so that he might truly understand her position. Could she have a pass for a messenger to carry the petition? Scudamore answered that Vavasour stated that he had no authority to permit such a pass, and that therefore he, Scudamore, must expect a positive answer to his Majesty's command to surrender. Brilliana then informed Scudamore that she would prepare a petition and turn it over to him for delivery to the King.

The defenders of the castle were gloomy. Brilliana's secret in-

telligence reported from London that the parliamentary party was in straits. Some of the besieged advised Brilliana that she might as well give up the castle, but upon her reply that she much preferred an honourable death, they recovered courage. Without further delay Brilliana drew up the petition that she had promised to have ready the next morning. In that petition she denied that she had taken up arms against the King or had harboured disloyal persons or had fired houses. But if his Majesty ordered her from her home, she hoped he would allow her enough for the maintenance of her family and a safe conduct to some other place.

Before she could send out this petition, on the morning of August 24th, she received a note from Scudamore telling her that the King's army was prevailing everywhere, and that many Lords and Commons were going over to the King. He must, he told her, have a positive answer.

Her reply was to send him the petition she had drawn to the King. Scudamore was exasperated. He informed Brilliana that her petition was too long by twenty lines, and too full of a spirit of contradiction. But since it was the best answer he could wring from her, he would be off with it early in the morning.

At some time during the same day Scudamore was allowed to enter the castle by a ladder and rope, and had a conference with the Lady Commander. What was said in no way altered Brilliana's previous decision, for on the next morning, August 25th, Scudamore again addressed her a letter. He had arranged a temporary cessation of the firing. He begged her to change her mind. Now for a bit of breakfast, and he was off to the King.

During all this time, Brilliana had been in correspondence with Ned. One man she sent on as a trooper and furnished him at the expense of eight pounds with a horse. She had tried to raise men for Ned's company but had found only three that would venture their lives. "I will endeavour to see whether any will contribute

to buy a horse, but those that have hearts have not means, and they that have means have not hearts." She had enough to look after at Brampton, but Ned's affairs in the army must be included in her purview. Even the character of the warfare was worth a postscript. "I am confident you will hate all plundering and unmercifulness."

When it came to a siege she wrote him to announce that the gentlemen of the county had at last brought an army against her. She longed to hear from him. The men in the castle she found very helpful. There was not much else in the note. But there in the oppressive silence that had fallen during the intermission of fighting she had suffered her deepest injury. Her enemies had cut Ned completely out of her life.

He was off fighting, in constant danger, too busy no doubt to think about his mother and her tribulations. In her letter to him, written just after she had been relieved of her besiegers and three weeks before her death, she wrote: "My dear Ned, how much I long to see you I cannot express, and if it be possible, in part meet my desires in desiring, in some measure as I do, to see me." It was part of her woman's tragedy that even her darling Ned was less interested in her than she in him.

Sir Robert had not been wholly unmindful of his wife's difficulties at Brampton. We have no record of all he may have done, but we know, what possibly she never learned, that he attempted to intercede in her behalf. Young George Goring, a prisoner in the Tower, was for the time being in Sir Robert's charge and had received kindnesses from him which he endeavoured to return. He wrote to his father, then in attendance upon the King, asking that Lady Harley, her children and her servants, should be given a pass to come to London.

The truce at the castle lasted several days while Scudamore carried Brilliana's petition to the King. During that time the de-

fenders were cheered to learn that the condition of the parliamentary forces was not as bad as had been represented. Gloucester was holding out, and Sir William Brereton hoped to come to the aid of Brampton. Consequently, the puritans of the castle were in better spirits when Scudamore returned from court. He asked to be admitted to the castle by the "unhandsome way," that is, probably by the rope and ladder which he had climbed before.

Brilliana, however, had caught a cold. Even such an illness, she reflected, could be turned to advantage when one was playing for time. On September 2nd she wrote Scudamore that her indisposition would prevent her from seeing him and that she hoped he would write her what he had to tell her.

Scudamore replied that he had no order to write; hence he must return to court and report that my lady had not admitted him. He did, however, have another letter for her. It proved to be from Vavasour, still in command of the siege troops, but at the moment at Langford. Vavasour informed the lady that the King had consented to grant a pass for herself and her servants, but that she was to deliver up her arms to the King's use. This terse information was short of the truth. Vavasour had probably by this time received Lord Falkland's letter of August 30th, stating that the King was not satisfied with Lady Harley's excuses nor with her aspersions upon his soldiers, but that he offered her and those with her full pardon and licence to depart out of the castle with what arms, ammunition, ordnance excepted, they pleased to take. Or if the King's forces were admitted to the castle, she might remain there until she had provided herself with another habitation.

The difference between what Falkland wrote Vavasour and what Vavasour wrote Brilliana is patent. Falkland had said that Brilliana and her company might depart with their arms. Vavasour had said that she must give them up.

Vavasour's letter had been handed Brilliana on Saturday. Still



exerting herself to stretch the negotiations to their last limits, she advised Scudamore that she would answer Vavasour the following Monday. Scudamore was not pleased at being manoeuvred about in this way. He had gone to a good deal of trouble to secure from the King what he considered generous terms for Lady Harley. Yet here he was no further along than he had been before. Even to himself he was beginning to look a little foolish, and at the hands of a woman whom the countryside had believed too fragile to deal with such a situation. He sent Brilliana a sharp note returning to the point from which she had sent him on a detour a week before, demanding an immediate answer as to whether she were going to deliver up the castle.

Brilliana was beginning to have difficulty in thinking up devices of protraction. How much longer she could lead these gentlemen by the nose remained to be seen. But once more she took up her trusty pen to explain that she really did not know how to give a positive answer, since she could not be sure that the King had seen her petition. While Brilliana awaited the reply, her spies reported that the royalist troops were beginning to undermine the walls with "hogs"; they brought news also that Waller, one of the parliamentary generals, was bound for Shropshire.

Two days passed quietly. On the 5th of September Scudamore returned with the proof that he had solicited Lady Harley's petition. He was now ready to wait upon her and to show her that he had obtained even more than she had asked for. Brilliana refused to admit him and demanded his instructions in writing. To her emissary on the bowling green he handed over a copy of the letter Falkland had written Vavasour, adding that he himself had power to grant what other conditions her Ladyship could in reason demand.

It was a favourable offer, and it is possible that two weeks

earlier Brilliana would have accepted it, but the situation had changed. Parliamentary troops were drawing nearer.

Next morning she dispatched her last letter to Scudamore. She would not be satisfied until a petition presented by her own friends had been handed to the King.

Not long after this letter reached Scudamore, the booming of guns proclaimed the end of negotiations. But the bombardment did not last long. By now the parliamentary armies were in the west pressing the King's troops so hard that Vavasour had to raise the siege. He rode away to join the King's army where he was jeered at by his brother officers for his humiliation at the hands of a woman.

Brilliana spent no time in exulting over the success of her procrastinations. After watching her enemies march away, she sat down to write her brother, Lord Conway, who had upbraided her for resisting to the last extremity, a defence of her actions, renewing the arguments she had practised with the enemy.

There was much left at Brampton for her to do. The walls of the castle were solid, but the roof was full of holes, and there was not a dry room in the building. Her provisions were low and her estate was bare. Supplies had to be obtained from an unfriendly countryside who put the blame on Brilliana for the miseries they had suffered with lands overrun and crops injured. She was indignant at them for the help given the enemy. She had to compel them by force to assist in levelling the ramparts which they had helped to erect against her. She had indeed to use force to compel them to give her provisions.

For some weeks she was not molested. In October she heard that Vavasour with his troops was on his way back to Brampton. Her husband had been able to communicate with her and had expressed the wish that she come away. Brilliana longed to do so, but there was no stirring without a convoy. Besides she had a

cold, and her former illness seemed to be returning. In the middle of October she asked Sir Robert for instructions how to plan her escape from Brampton. She had just received a letter from Vava-sour "after his usual strain that he must proceed against me as an enemy because I had taken from my tenants what they owed me."

Troops were moving into towns near Brampton. Brilliana countered by extending her command. She put soldiers into Wigmore Castle about five miles away. Then she settled down to wait for winter.

Before the royalists appeared to open the second siege, Brilliana died. She had borne the rigours of the first siege remarkably well; but she had been under great strain, and her normally poor health came upon her as soon as she caught a cold in the damp castle. Towards the end of October she was stricken with apoplexy and convulsions and died on the 29th. Her body was wrapped up in lead and placed in the high tower of the castle until funeral rites could be held. It was a kindly fate that spared her the second siege, for that was a savage affair. The remnants of her army at Brampton held out until Easter, 1644, and then surrendered. The castle was burned by Prince Rupert's order. Brilliana's leaden shroud was opened and searched for jewels and then raked up in "close cinders." Her children and the faithful Bletchley were detained at Ludlow for a time and then sheltered by Sir John Scudamore until they obtained passes to go to London.

Samuel Moore, one of Brilliana's warriors, sent word to Sir Robert and Ned of Brilliana's death: "At six o'clock this Sabbath day the sweet Lady's soul went to keep the eternal Sabbath in heaven where she can never be besieged."



## Nicholas Assheton

THERE is no type more persistent in the English generations than the huntin'-fishin'-shootin' squire. He still rides over Exmoor and under Skiddaw, and is not quite lost among the city brokers at the meets in high Leicestershire. He is to be seen with his friends at the meet at the Cock and Pye in Masefield's narrative poem, *Reynard the Fox or The Ghost Heath Run*. He looks out at us from Sargent's portrait of the Old Squire, the picture of Lord Ribblesdale said to have been painted at the request of Edward VII. He walks in and out of Trollope's novels and is the central figure of some of them. His type was perhaps more common among the landed families of the nineteenth century than among such families in any century before.

But the hunting squire is no monopoly of the nineteenth century; he belongs to the eighteenth as well and comes to life in the character of Squire Western in Fielding's *Tom Jones*. He appears in the figure described in a previous chapter, that good Catholic Thomas Tyldesley. When we go back to the seventeenth century there were fewer sporting squires, for a larger proportion of the county folk were interested in politics, in religion, and in books. But the hunting squire was there just the same; often he was a small squire who seldom went to London, and who was little concerned with what went on outside his own shire. He rode placidly behind his hounds between the opposing armies at the battle of Edgehill, as if the issue between the King and parliament were a light matter beside the pursuit of his Majesty, Reynard the Fox.

And that is the way Nicholas Assheton would have looked upon the importance of hunting. He made little jottings of his daily life during the years 1617 and 1618, almost a hundred years before those of Thomas Tyldesley in the same county. They are jottings that in spite of their small quantity offer us some notion of the hunting gentleman and of his daily round over three centuries ago. In part of one sentence he epitomized his routine: "Eat, drunk wine, and was merry, and to the field again."

Nicholas lived at Downham in Ribblesdale, close to the border of the West Riding of Yorkshire. To most of us Ribblesdale seen from a Midland train connotes a narrow, houseless valley between lonesome slopes of the western Pennines. But the valley of the Ribble widens out at length and shows evidence of habitation; by the time Downham is reached it has become a fair expanse of pasture lands divided by hedges as well as by those walls we associate with the north. It is a fertile country where farmers must have done well and country gentlemen better. Indeed back from the roads, set compactly in a glen or against the meeting place of two slopes, are to be seen old manorial houses that tell of prosperity in the dale, a few of them occupied still by men of the same name as those with whom Nicholas drank and hunted. They were not great houses, but commodious structures about the size of large farmhouses or vicarages today. It is not hard to find coats of arms carved over the gateways and doors of buildings that today are farmhouses and not too large for farmers.

The house which Nicholas and his wife shared with his father and mother was just such a dwelling. It was shaped like an E facing both ways. In the eighteenth century it was made over into a fine modern mansion, but the walls of the old house can be traced within the building and at the rear, and the present Asshetons have estate maps that give us even a small sketch of the old dwelling. The rooms were smaller in size than today, and they

were enough for the Richard Asshetons and their heir and his wife, as well as for a few servants. The house stood on a high terrace on the east side of Ribblesdale. From the lawns at the rear the Asshetons could look across grassy slopes southeast to Pendle Hill, the mountain dominating that part of Lancashire. A Roman road can be traced across the front lawns of the estate which interests the present Asshetons more than it would have interested Nicholas, if he had known it.

Nicholas was the second son, and since the death of his older brother, the heir of Richard Assheton who had inherited a good deal of land from his great-uncle, a man fortunate in the friendship of Lord Burghley. His two younger brothers, Alexander and George, had gone to London, the first becoming a linen-draper in St. Paul's Churchyard. His sister, Dorothy, married Richard Sherborne, a natural son of Sir Richard Sherborne of Stonyhurst. Nicholas himself had married Frances Greenacres of that family who sixty years before had sold Downham to the Asshetons, and had so brought into his own family a few score more acres adjacent to the Assheton holdings. We know little of the financial arrangements between Nicholas and his father, but it would have been proper for his father on the son's marriage to have turned over to him certain lands and income. That Nicholas was not oversupplied with money is evident throughout the diary. When he visited an alehouse, his record of expenses is more like that of Adam Eyre, yeoman, than that of Thomas Tyldesley, gentleman. But this was thirty years earlier than Adam Eyre and a hundred years before Tyldesley, and we must remember that money bought more in the earlier time.

Nicholas could not have been a wealthy man, yet he seems to have had less to do with farming than many a greater gentleman. One day he helped with the haying and another with the wheat.

He speaks of a day spent in the orchard and of grafting, but never of hours or days in the garden.

It takes no reading between the lines of the diary to conclude that he had little regular occupation. He visited neighbours up and down the dales and across the moors even into valleys a long way off. To follow his excursions with a map is almost to believe that he had a motor-car. He must have owned good horses which could not only carry on for a long distance but were used to heavy climbs and sharp descents. With other gentlemen and parsons he went to fairs, probably less to make purchases than to hobnob with friends. He joined in the celebration of a rush-bearing when once a year women redecorated the church. "Much less solemnity than formerly," he noted, as if lamenting the passing of one good custom. Funerals he attended all over the eastern part of the county and in the adjacent vales of the West Riding. The swainmote, or forest court, for Bowland found him present as well as the assizes, when the royal judges came processing into the county. Such activities must have been an interruption of his attendance at the alehouse and have cut in upon good days for hunting.

It was a country made for hunting. From his house it was no distance to Downham Moor and Worston Moor and the great slopes of Pendle. But if he were willing to push his horse a matter of ten or twelve miles over low moors to the valley of the Hodder, he would come at length to Slaidburn, near which lived his brother-in-law, Richard Sherborne. There right in front of Slaidburn rose the massif called Bowland Forest, cutting off his part of Lancashire from the western part near the sea, a series of moors that rose from eight hundred to sixteen hundred feet, rounded hills with occasional sharp edges, covered today with bracken. It is probable that he hunted all the moors of the Forest of Bowland, but those he mentioned in particular were Harden, Croasdale, Totteridge, and Brennan. Two points that he spoke of, Scout



Stones and Brennan Stones, are not set down in the ordnance maps today, but the latter is still known to keepers and shepherds.

Those moors today, to the motorist on the road through to Lancaster, look attractive for walking. In Assheton's day it is probable that there were no walkers for recreation. A hundred years later Defoe in his tour over England gazed upon these moors from the west side and declared that they were not only formidable but that they had a kind of inhospitable terror in them. One can well believe that people in Defoe's day and even more in Assheton's would have looked upon them in that way—unless they were hunters.

Many a day Nicholas was off in pursuit of the fox. Hounds were used, of course, but how much formality there was about the hunts the diary does not reveal. One suspects that there was little; perhaps the gentlemen did not even wear pink coats; certainly there were no champagne lunches. It seems easier to believe that the hunts were more of the kind said to be still carried on by farmers in Bilsdale in northeastern Yorkshire, where if a farmer sights a fox he will drop his work, assemble his two hounds and set off, blowing a horn that his neighbours with their dogs may join him. We know that Nicholas often started off with only one or two companions. In a good many instances the fox got away, as he does today in the best managed hunts. Nicholas hunted one day near his home and killed a fox; he pursued another all the way to Pendle; he was able to kill a third one and to earth a fourth; and that must have made it an exceptionally good day's work.

Stag hunting called for more effort. It was a question of getting up to Harden Moor and Brennan Stones or to Burn Fell and Toteridge. One evening a party that included some of the great from London met at dinner where it was proposed that they should hunt the next day; early on the next morning they were off to

the moors. But to judge from Nicholas the stags were often as successful as the foxes in avoiding their pursuers. The chase was sometimes the result of news from the upper dales. Word would come to a village that a stag had been sighted at a certain spring in the hills of Bowland. "Walbank took his piece, and Miller his, but he [the stag] was not to be found." It was often so.

There was other quarry. Hares were constantly being pursued. Nicholas records the catching of a badger, which gamekeepers say are pretty rare in that part of the country today; he mentions shooting heathcocks, or grouse, but only occasionally, and one gathers that grouse were scarcer on the moors then than today. Nicholas's friends went hawking, and his cousin was unfortunate enough to lose his hawk. All the gentlemen and some of the parsons fished in the Ribble and in its tributary, the Hodder, that comes right out of Bowland Forest. His catch Nicholas was likely to send to the parsonage.

In June of 1617 word came to Lancashire and was passed up to the remote dales that King James on his way down from Scotland was coming to hunt in their county. Probably most of the gentlemen in that part of the kingdom had never set eyes upon the King. Many of them knew little about the Court, save for rumours that spread slowly over the country. Few of them were interested in London. That metropolis Nicholas never mentions except twice when he had to go there to give evidence in suits. On his first trip, before leaving south Lancashire, he had run into the Earl of Derby who was hawking and had had some talk with that peer and watched him play dice. The Earl of Derby was a great man in Lancashire and could no doubt tell of London, but he, too, was a sporting gentleman and likely to be more interested in foxes than in parliament. But now the King was coming to Lancashire to engage in that pursuit which Lancashire men understood best.

The gentry began making preparations. Sir Richard Houghton, who lived over beyond the high moors in the land between the moors and the sea, was a man of importance in the county and known to be in the good graces of his sovereign. Nicholas was asked in discreet fashion through two intermediaries, one of them his brother-in-law, Richard Sherborne, if he would wear Sir Richard's livery and attend him at Hoghton during the royal visit. It was asking a good deal, but old feudal custom was that smaller gentlemen on occasion wore the coloured costumes and cloaks emblazoned with the arms of a great gentleman and attended him on horseback. It was not a menial service, for great gentlemen, the greatest in the realm, waited on the King. Nicholas sent back word that he would do Sir Richard any service.

On the eleventh of August the tailor brought Nicholas the suit and livery cloak. Nicholas's remark that he was willing to wear the livery of Sir Richard "rather for his grace and reputation, showing his neighbours' love, than any exacting of mean service" suggests that he was not too happy about what he had undertaken. It was custom, but custom perhaps less honoured than earlier.

On the next day Sir Richard and his company went over to meet the King, but his Majesty, more intent upon meeting the denizens of the wood than the gentry of the neighbourhood, slipped off into Myerscough Forest, a preserve so well stocked with deer that it would have been difficult to have missed hitting them. Sir Richard and his party were able to overtake the King, but found him set upon his main objective, shooting a stag.

It was not so interesting for Nicholas. "We that were in Sir Richard's livery had nothing to do but riding up and down."

Meanwhile the King had settled himself at Myerscough Lodge, the home of Edward Tyldesley, the great-grandfather of that Thomas Tyldesley we have already met in these narratives. Nicholas does not mention the Tyldesleys by name and it may be that

he was not overly pleased that his sovereign was stopping with a Catholic family.

The royal visit to Lancashire was destined in a curious way to have some national significance. In no part of England were people more addicted to sports, and in no part was the puritan opposition to them stronger. Morton, the Bishop of Chester, whose diocese included Lancashire, was not without an understanding of the puritan point of view and was inclined to discourage Sunday games and sports. On the second day of the royal visit, as the monarch was returning from the hunt in an expansive mood, having killed five bucks, he was greeted by a motley delegation of servants, labourers and mechanics who complained that they were barred from all recreations on Sunday. This was a chance for the King to make a speech. There was always an urge in him to tell his subjects how things should be, and he did not fail of his mission on this occasion. He proceeded to talk of liberty for piping and the desirability of honest recreation on the Lord's day. It is an easy guess that some of the courtiers had inspired the delegation and the King's speech. At any rate the royal words met with enthusiastic approval, and on the next Sunday there was so much piping and dancing outside of one church in the district that the services could hardly be heard by those inside. This was too much for Bishop Morton who appealed to the King, and he in turn, always more moderate after he had expressed himself, may have consulted Bishop Launcelot Andrewes, then in attendance. The upshot at any rate was that Bishop Morton was asked to draw up a moderate statement about Sunday sports, and this statement, as worked over by James, is said to have been the basis of the Book of Sports published in the next year, a pronunciamiento that gave offence to puritans over the whole realm.

This speech was but one of the interludes in his Majesty's hunting. Even at that time royal progresses were punctuated with per-



BLIEVED TO BE NICHOLAS ASSHETON



functory ceremonies and gracious entertainment by gentlemen of handsome estates. On his way to Hoghton Tower, the King paused at Preston, chief town of that part of Lancashire, to accept the corporation's presentation of a bowl, and to attend a banquet in the town hall. The King also went down into Hoghton's alum mines and "viewed them precisely." Listening to encomiums by corporations and admiring local industries were duties that must have made the lot of a sovereign an unhappy one. But James was not long deterred from his pleasures. He rushed off from the alum mines to shoot a stag.

The King was not quite done with the gentlemen of Lancashire. An advance guard of local knights and gentlemen, including Nicholas, had preceded his Majesty to Hoghton and had spent an evening in whetting their merriment for the royal reception. "We were desired to be merry, and at night were so," wrote Nicholas. It was gratuitous advice for Lancashire gentlemen. On Sunday the King arrived for the great feast at Hoghton. The gentlemen served the Lords with biscuit, wine and jelly, as they would have done in an earlier feudal day. Probably the servants had waited on all the guests, and at a final course the gentlemen rose from their seats and served the Lords. As was proper, the Bishop of Chester, our friend Morton, preached before the King. Then in the afternoon there was a rushbearing accompanied by piping, an effort possibly to live up to the royal taste for the pipes.

The dinner that day was not essentially different from many recorded in the narratives of the court of James I, but the menu is startling to those not accustomed to the practices of the age. In the first course there were twenty-eight meat dishes, among them such treats as boiled sprod, cold rabbit, snipe pie, roast herons and curlew pie. The second course was simply another series of meat dishes, with "pullets and grease" and dried hog's cheek; the only non-meat dishes were pear tart and buttered

pease. No salads were mentioned, although people did eat them. The Plain Country Fellow, according to John Earle, did not eat grass because he loved no salads.

The evening's entertainment consisted of a masque by noblemen, knights, gentlemen, and courtiers. Nicholas's words were: "Some speeches; of the rest, dancing the Huckler, Tom Bedlo, and the Cowp Justice of Peace." Other contemporary accounts are more enlightening. There was a spectacle in that part of the garden called the "middle circular," with a man enclosed in a "dendrological foliage of fronds." Frolics were carried on "to the highest pitch" by Robin Goodfellow, Bill Huckler, Tom Bedlo, old Crambo, Jem Tosspot, Dolly Wango, and the Cap Justice. These characters of old English dances were played to everyone's satisfaction, and the three justices, Croke, Houghton, and Doddridge, who were present declared that the character of the Cap Justice, taken by Sir John Finett, was played to the very life. It sounds a bit fantastic, but no more so than do many of the masques and revels of the reign of James.

Next day the King departed, and there must have been quiet along the lower Ribble. But the crowd of gentlemen with whom Nicholas had consorted went back to Hoghton with Sir Richard, where that great man took them to his cellar, drank with them, and used them kindly "in all manner of friendly speech." Whether this means that he provided them with what makes for friendly speech Nicholas does not say. Next day Nicholas and his fellows went back to Preston and were as merry "as Robin Hood and all his fellows." On the following day he wrote: "All this morning we played the bacchanalians."

Playing the bacchanalians was something as much accepted as hunting foxes. Nicholas's diary is full of his drinking. He went with his brother-in-law to Slaidburn, probably to hunt, but it rained, and "so we stayed and tiddled most of the day *and were*



*too foolish.*" They must have been foolish indeed, for Nicholas spent eleven shillings, which would have provided plenty of wine and ale for several people. It was not long after that he wrote, "To the ale all. . . . When I laid me down I was sick with drink." He had been with Goffe Whitacre that day, perhaps a yeoman, with whom he was very merry another time. Again he was "more than merry," or "somewhat too busy with drink." His friends were no less busy. Richard Sherborne, his sister's husband, "being somewhat, etc.," fell at a bridge in front of his house and put his left shoulder out of joint. Such lapses Nicholas took as a matter of course. For his own failures in sobriety he did not apologize even to his diary, and there is no indication that he felt remorse or that he was the worse for it the next day.

He was living such a life in the open air that he could stand drinks. He and his friends played shuffleboard, shot with long bows and cross-bows, ran foot-races with villagers on the green; they went to cockings, or cock-fights, they put up their horses against those of others. One July day Nicholas went down the dale to Clitheroe and stayed there drinking wine: "so to a summer game, Sherborne's mare run, and lost the bell; made merry." Nicholas never crossed the path of Viscount Conway, Brilliana Harley's whimsical brother, but he would have understood what Conway meant when he wrote: "We eat and drink and rise up to play, and this is to live like a gentleman, for what is a gentleman but his pleasure."

Between the episodes of hunts and games there was one serious event that engaged Nicholas's attention, nothing less than a case of private warfare.

Word came to Nicholas that Raydale House, where Mrs. John Robinson, his wife's aunt, lived, on Semerwater up a little valley to the south of Wensleydale, had been attacked by Sir Thomas Metcalfe, who had come, it appears from testimony given afterwards,

with about sixty men armed with muskets, calivers, pikes, javelins, long bows and arrows. Sir Thomas had recently been dispossessed and was out to recover "by club law" what he had lost by common law, taking advantage of Mr. Robinson's absence in London.

The attackers demanded the surrender of the house and discharged their pieces against it. When Mrs. Robinson came out of the house and asked Sir Thomas what was his authority for his assault upon her house, she was told that his word was law. According to later evidence she was thrown down, beaten and laid in a ditch for dead. When she came to herself she was compelled by Sir Thomas to remove with her small children to a shelter three miles away. Meanwhile the besiegers continued to fire at the house. The defence was maintained by young John Robinson and his brothers and a few retainers who piled featherbeds, bolsters and pillows against the windows and who were so eager in returning the fire of their assailants that they killed one of them, Thomas Hodson. At this the attacking company "rejoiced and said all was their own, that was worth all the rest, they within the house should all be hanged." Lady Metcalfe tried to hire a woman to fire the house, "promising to bear her out in it."

Mrs. Robinson, according to Nicholas, appealed to two justices of the peace, who were reluctant to move. Then she set out for York, probably to take her case to the Council of the North.

When the news of the assault came to Nicholas, he went to consult with his father-in-law, Richard Greenacres. Greenacres, although "aged and infirm," was willing to go to Raydale, and he and Nicholas with a servant apiece set out on a long ride over the hills to Semerwater, hoping to move Sir Thomas to some peaceable course. On arriving, they were told that Metcalfe and his company were drinking at a nearby village. They sent a servant to request an audience. Metcalfe, busy in an alehouse, sent back to them a George Scarr, "who after an insolent, disrespectful and

braving manner, said unto them that he was a servant unto Sir Thomas Metcalfe, and that he understood of their desire to speak with him, but they could not at that time, . . . if they would relate their business to him, he was sufficient to carry a message from them, and had been employed in such business by better men than they." Mr. Greenacres explained that he wished to speak to Sir Thomas to entreat a peaceful and quiet proceeding, and Scarr replied that his master was come to take possession and would have it. "And during this conference," testified Nicholas afterwards in the Star Chamber, "there came unto them and beset them round, one with a sword, another with a long pitchfork, another with a horseman's staff." Scarr inquired Greenacres' name and when told replied: "'I perceive you are Mistress Robinson's Lancashire friends . . . but, come when you will, we are provided for you, if you be but a hundred or two hundred strong.' 'Nay,' said another of the said Scarr's company, 'if they come all Lancashire, we are for them, we came not hither to clip stayne or pull hog.' " Greenacres asked them whence they came and they replied that they came from the borders and other places abroad (other counties). Scarr added that his Lady (Lady Metcalfe, he probably meant) wished she might wear doublet and breeches but to fight with young Robinson in the field for the title.

As the armed men became more threatening, Nicholas and his father-in-law retreated. There was nothing else to do.

Young Robinson was able to maintain the house until his mother returned from York with a sergeant and a pursuivant, who took Sir Thomas and five or six of his men into custody.

It was a long while before Metcalfe was punished. He brought action against young Robinson for murder and won his case in the coroner's court, where the jury were friendly to the clan of Metcalfes—it was little less than a clan in Wensleydale. But eventually

the case came before the Star Chamber and Metcalfe was fined heavily.

It seems an extraordinary story, as if out of the fifteenth century. And yet one who has read Star Chamber reports knows that there was still a good deal of private warfare, and not only in far northern dales. We must remember that these men were only a little over a century away from the Wars of the Roses and the lawlessness of that time. They accepted the rules as they found them convenient.

They had accepted the Church, of course. They understood about the parson and two services on Sunday, about the baptism and churching and the use or disuse of the surplice. Nicholas was a mighty hunter before the Lord, but he was in his pew on Sunday mornings and was at least attentive enough to the sermon to record in his brief account the book and chapter from which the text was taken and even to speak of one sermon as excellent. For all we know he may have been interested in theology. He had a study built over his porch and he makes a curious allusion to a "follower of Brerely," one of the less-known theologians.

At any rate, he was religious enough to attend services again in the afternoon. The custom of inviting the parson to dine on Sunday with the squire was not yet general, and only once do we find the parson dining with Nicholas, though Nicholas dined more often with the parson. These Lancashire parsons should have been on the best of terms with Nicholas, for many of them, however puritan, did not assume that their cloth should prevent them from hunting and fishing.

Nicholas refers several times to "exercises," which were non-episcopal religious services conducted usually in the afternoon. Such services he attended and listened to discussions about them that sometimes grew acrimonious. Mr. Leigh, of Standish, one of the outstanding clergymen of the district and one to whom Nich-

olas himself sometimes listened, would administer the sacrament without wearing a surplice, and this caused such warm debate between Nicholas's father and his brother-in-law (that brother-in-law who, "being somewhat," had fallen at the bridge) that his father refused to return to the house of his son-in-law. Even Nicholas's wife had puritan leanings. What Nicholas himself thought we are not told, but it is clear that he was a faithful attendant of his own parish church, whatever the particular clergyman chose to preach. He may have been like the old bold mate of Henry Morgan who was for toleration and for drinking at an inn.

It is not easy from his terse entries of events to make out his social and moral codes, what seemed to him right and what becoming. That he was charitable shows merely that he understood what was expected of his kind. On the death of his child he donated to the poor of five villages what he judged their several needs required. Another episode tells more about him. When Sir Richard Assheton of Middleton died, Nicholas sent to Middleton for "blacks," but when he learned that his cousin, Radcliffe Assheton, had none, he sent word that those he had hoped to wear were to be given to his cousin. He put his old cloak about him, and he was as fond of new clothes as anyone. It is further to be observed that the two long journeys that he took, one over into Wensleydale, and the other to London to testify in the Robinson case, were undertaken in the interest of others.

His attitude towards drinking is significant neither about himself nor his class. It was probably the attitude of most of his neighbours, gentlemen and yeomen, puritans and non-puritans. It was proper enough to be too merry with drink, but what Nicholas did regret was the money spent. When a group of Assheton's relatives fraternized at the alehouse, Nicholas put down: "Charges too much, idle expense." In his county men parted with their pennies even more reluctantly than in regions farther north.

His attitude towards his own class and the classes below him would be revealing if we but had the evidence. He was hunting one day with friends above Walloper Well in a private preserve when one of his friends shot two hinds. Just then the gamekeeper appeared, but was bribed with the skin and shoulder of one hind and a present of five shillings not to tell. In a later generation country gentlemen would have been above poaching, regarding it as disloyal to their own kind. Nicholas might have remembered that his father-in-law had a deer preserve.

Nicholas has not much to say about his wife, and that is a pity, for we could much more nearly fathom his character if we knew him in his home. We have seen that she was the daughter of a neighbouring gentleman, and that she brought him some acres. To bring a dowry and to bear children were the first duties of a gentlewoman, and it was well that she should bear many so that, however many died in infancy, she might assure her husband a male heir.

During the twenty-two months covered by the diary, Mrs. Assheton brought two children into the world, the second just two days less than a year after the first. That was doing about as well as could have been expected of her. With her first child, she had a narrow escape. "Her delivery," wrote Nicholas, "was with such violence as the child died within half an hour, and but for God's wonderful mercy, more than human reason could expect, she had died, but he spared her a while longer to me, and took the child to his mercy." There were gentlemen who, if the babe were a son, would have preferred a reverse arrangement by Providence. Viscount Conway, Brilliana Harley's brother, alluded to "old Brooke" who did wish "to have a son living and a wife dead." But Nicholas for the great mercy bestowed upon him rendered "all submissive, hearty thanks and praise to the only good and gracious God of Israel."

But these were women's affairs. Nicholas was of the larger out-of-door world. If he had little regular occupation he was not lazy. He did not lie abed all morning as did a country gentleman in Essex at about this time, Humphrey Mildmay, who also kept a diary. Ennui and idleness, said Bishop Hacket, were the English gentleman's disease. Climbing over the moors to Bowland or to the top of Totteridge, or over Brennan Stones, even if on horseback, was not loafing. And all the journeys up and down Ribblesdale, over into Whitendale to the west, and northeast into far Wensleydale to see this cousin and that friend, were not for easy-going men. The tendency to go soft that is to be found among an aristocracy with no fixed occupation was no danger in the case of this hunting gentleman. It was the active, hard-riding life that kept the Nicholas Asshetons wholesome and sane and civilized, that preserved them as fairly sensible leaders of their communities. To be sure they were leaders that looked backwards; they were conservatives, brakes on the political machine, but useful perhaps when the roads were steep and slippery. It is they who may be fairly praised for the continuity of English life, for the living unity between the Westminster of Edward I and George VI. The government they stood behind was only more continuous than the type they represented. For Nicholas Assheton was an earlier name for John Bull.

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## Henry Lord Berkeley

IN the sixteenth century when Henry, Lord Berkeley, settled upon the cushion of his ancestors and succeeded to the title and honours of his family, he could trace his heritage through nineteen predecessors.<sup>1</sup> Since before the Conquest his forbears had been lords of the country between the Cotswolds and the wide Severn. The hundred of Berkeley was the rightful dominion of these lords, but now and then they had extended their holdings by marriage, inheritance and purchase. At one time the Berkeleys held manors in eighteen counties as well as in Wales, Ireland and Calais. On the windows and walls of countless churches the arms and sometimes the pictures of the Berkeleys were eminent ensigns of the greatness of this family when its lands reached from Yorkshire to Somerset and Sussex, and from Wales to Cambridgeshire. A Lord Berkeley finished his title with the names of Mowbray, Segrave and Braose, and quartered the arms of Longespee, Blundevill, Plantagenet, Marshall, Strongbow, Stanhope and many another family.

Mowbray and Plantagenet and some of the others "were entombed in the urns and sepulchres of mortality" but the Berkeleys survived. Not that the house of Berkeley had been spared the ravages that had tumbled many another ancient peerage. Somehow, though, the line had always produced a patient, persevering lord just when he was most needed, or a faithful servant had been at

<sup>1</sup> We cheerfully confess that we have crept upon the shoulders of a taller man for the furniture of this story and have climbed his trees to see our way the better, for the details and much of the phraseology of this account, even of this note, belong to John Smyth of Nibley. Smyth would not mind this close pilfering.

hand to tide the family over critical years. Lord Robert the Second lost his lands for rebelling against King John but recovered most of them when Henry III ascended the throne. High-flying Lord Maurice the Third joined heartily in the war of the barons against Edward II and the Despensers. Lord Maurice was imprisoned; the revenue from his estates was confiscated by the King. The next Lord, Thomas the Third, was suspected of knowing more than he ought about the circumstances of the torture and murder of Edward II; but Lord Thomas was not convicted of participation in the deed itself and was eventually restored to the Berkeley possessions by the clever courtiership of his servant, Thomas de Bradston. Lord Thomas the Third so tended to the husbandry of his estates that he soon was styled Lord Thomas the Rich. Who could doubt that he deserved the title when it was known that on one manor he had 6,000 sheep, on many others he had 1,500 or 1,000 and never less than 300? Of other things, fowl, cattle, and crops, he harvested in like extraordinary proportions. Before he died in 1361 he ventured to believe that he had assured the prosperity of his house for generations to come. Two generations later, Lord Thomas the Fourth died without male heir. He had married his only daughter, Elizabeth, to the eldest son of the Earl of Warwick, and to her Lord Thomas left all the Berkeley holdings that were not entailed. But the ancient barony of Berkeley and its appurtenances descended to James, nephew to Lord Thomas the Fourth.

Now was this noble house cleft asunder, to lie pressed under lawsuits and brawls of one hundred and ninety-two years' agitation. When nephew James endeavoured to take up his heritage he commenced a struggle that the lords of Berkeley were to carry on for two centuries, down to the last years of Lord Henry. The Warwicks determined to oppose the accession of Lord James, and they were ably assisted therein by their three angry daughters.

Foremost of the daughters was Margaret, Countess of Shrewsbury, who as long as she lived traded blow for blow, suit for suit, violence for violence with Lord James and his sons. At her death she passed the generalship to her son, Viscount Lisle. Overwhelmed by the power that the Warwicks, Shrewsburys and Lisles displayed, Lord James confessed himself a weak hop in need of a strong pole to cling to. He was forced to pledge a goodly portion of his anticipated income as a bribe at Court before he could obtain his inheritance. The rest of his life he spent in warding off and repaying in kind the depredations of the Warwicks and Lisles, who entered into the spirit of the Wars of the Roses by sending their armed retainers against him, showered him with lawsuits, badgered him with protections that they had obtained at Court and even imprisoned, publicly humiliated and tortured himself and his sons. The manor house at Wotton, ancient seat of the Berkeleys, was now used by the Countess of Shrewsbury and Viscount Lisle as headquarters where they planned attacks against the house of Berkeley. Lord James and his sons fortified and tried to defend Berkeley Castle; but though they were bad-tempered enough, they were seldom sufficiently masterful to match the ingenious devilry of their opponents.

For a time Lord William was more successful than his father had been and seemed well on the way to regain many of the old Berkeley tenements. Viscount Lisle simplified matters when he challenged Lord William to battle on Nibley Green. Lord William promptly accepted. By next morning he had gathered about a thousand men in the outskirts of Michaelwood Chace where he lay in wait until he saw Lord Lisle and his somewhat smaller army wind down the steep hill from Nibley Church. The village boys who had scrambled to the treetops to watch the spectacle saw Lisle slain by the first shower of arrows loosed by Lord William's army. Wasting no time on obsequies, Lord William promptly en-

tered upon many of the manors in Berkeley hundred which the Lisles had held. They were not formally restored to Lord William, but by agreement, awaiting future developments, he was to retain them.

Now that the Lisles were temporarily subdued Lord William became one of the great landholders in England, and the greatest in the Berkeley line. In addition to the Berkeley holdings, he inherited from his mother's family extensive estates in many other shires. Having in his ambitious opinion too much land and too little honour, he humoured himself by disposing of practically all the land he possessed. Much of it he distributed at Court to those who knew best how to make pomposity blossom on the stalk of a weed. There remained his patrimony, which might also be put to use, for he had no heir male; that is, none except his brother, Maurice, who had offended Lord William by marrying an obscure woman, a woman of mean blood, the daughter of a Bristol alderman. With one stroke Lord William satisfied his spite and his aspiration. To King Henry VII he conveyed the castle and manor of Berkeley, together with many of its appendant manors. The King was to inherit the Berkeley patrimony provided Lord William had no male heir. In return for all this Lord William became Marquis of Berkeley and Earl Marshal. When Marquis William died without heirs, his brother Maurice claimed the Berkeley title *de jure*.

Maurice inherited nothing but the claim to the title and that no one was disposed to recognize. Patiently he reviewed the alienations of property that his brother, Marquis William, had made. Cautiously he brought suit after suit in the King's courts until he had recovered fifty manors for his estate. With a milk-white head in his irksome old age of seventy years, in winter terms and frosty seasons, clutching a buckram bag stuffed with briefs and other law papers, accompanied by his son who carried the law

books, Maurice could be seen early mornings and late evenings walking between the Inns of Court and Westminster Hall to plead his suits in his own old person. Notwithstanding this perseverance, he could not detach the hundred and castle of Berkeley from the King's hands. Maurice's successors were summoned to parliament as barons and some of them lived in Berkeley Castle as Constable for the King. But the Berkeley patrimony did not revert to the house of Berkeley until Edward VI, last heir male of Henry VII, died.

This reversion of the Berkeley estates, when it did come, fell into the lap of Lord Henry, but he was too youthful to realize the importance of these old, rusty entails. Lord Henry was a posthumous child, born in 1534, and of course during his minority his estates were in wardship to the King. The wardship was granted to the Earl of Sussex who in turn assigned it to Anne, Lady Berkeley, the tempestuous mother of Lord Henry.

Lady Anne was a comely, brownish woman, of medium stature and a masculine spirit, overpowerful with her husband, seldom at rest with herself, and never wanting discontent to work upon. During her son's infancy Lady Anne hotly pursued her brother-in-law, Maurice Berkeley, in court and out because she believed he was keeping lands that rightfully belonged to her and her son. Maurice retaliated with several riotous acts against the Lady and her property.

Lady Anne procured from the King a commission to inquire into these riots and misdemeanours of her brother-in-law, and had herself named one of the commissioners. Whereupon she came to Gloucester, sat on the Bench in the Public Sessions Hall, empanelled a jury, took the evidence, found Maurice and his fellows guilty, and fined them smartly. In consequence of this for many years afterwards country people could not be shaken in their belief that Lady Anne had been a justice of the peace.

Unfortunately this headstrong Lady overreached herself in attempting to secure for her son his heritage of the hundred of Berkeley. Lady Anne knew, as soon as Edward VI died, that Lord Henry could reclaim the Berkeley lands which Marquis William had alienated some sixty years before. Moreover, Queen Mary was friendly to Lady Anne and was prepared to restore young Lord Henry's property with a sound title. Lady Anne's counsel advised her to allow Lord Henry to receive the lands, not by way of restitution and confirmation of the old title, but by a new and complete grant from the Queen. Lady Anne preferred simple restitution because she hoped thereby to upset many of the leases that had been made while the lands reposed with the Crown. In permitting Lord Henry to accept the restoration of the Berkeley estates by that process of confirmation of title she left the way open for a new generation of Warwicks and Lisles to revive the claims that had been stifled while the King had been in possession. The mistake cost some £50,000.

Of all this young Lord Henry understood little at the time. Lady Anne had been an indulgent mother and had left him too much to the oversight of his own education. She had omitted to apprise him of the dark days of Berkeley history or of the puzzling questions of his own estate and titles. His mother was her own solicitor, and his too. At times he went with her to a tavern in Fleet Street and listened while Lady Anne conferred with serjeants-at-law and other distinguished counsel. But if Lord Henry had opinions, he probably knew better than to blunt them against the strong mind of the redoubtable dowager.

Lord Henry was busy with his gallantries. People about London were attracted by the tall, slender, red-nosed young Lord. They said he reminded them of his father and grandfather, and remarked that he was of as great note and hope as any of his age. They noticed that he was courted for marriage by many of the

greatest. Courtiers had not failed to observe how Queen Mary, when Wyatt's rebellion threatened, commissioned Lord Henry to arm five hundred of his tenants and servants and to march to her aid. Lord Henry had eagerly hastened to comply. He borrowed money from his tenants as a king raises money among his subjects by privy seals, he had equipped the five hundred men and led them halfway to London before he was met by Queen Mary's letter announcing that Wyatt had been captured and that my Lord might take his forces back to Gloucestershire. Long years after, hundreds of pieces of the armour that the Lord had provided collected dust in Berkeley Castle, dingy memorials of this expensive martial adventure.

But my Lord went to London just the same. This time he was accompanied, as he usually was for some years thereafter, by one hundred and fifty servants arrayed in their tawny coats in summer, with the badge of the white lion rampant embroidered on their left sleeves, or in coats of white frieze with crimson taffeta in winter. Cloth, buttons and badge were furnished by my Lord. He took up residence at his house on Tower Hill; or at times he went to live at his mother's house in "Kentish Town" or at another of her houses, the Bishop of Bangor's place in Shoe Lane by St. Andrew's Church in Holborn. In town Lord Henry frequented the Court, played tennis, cards, dice, shove-groat, bowls and at the cockpit, and hunted and hawked in Gray's Inn Fields and in all those parts towards Islington and Highgate, in the company of many gentlemen of the Inns of Court. He might be seen in his coach, his horses in such a furious course down Holborn Hill that the coachman was thrown out and Lord Henry would have smashed against the side of Holborn bridge but for the quick work of his Irish footman, Laughan.

Amid these revelries Lord Henry married young Katherine Howard and brought her to his house on Tower Hill. Then his

London appearances were the subject of even more comment, for he and his bride were as colourfully bedecked as any of the nobility in town. Shortly after their marriage they promenaded in splendour at the first Christmas festivities of Philip and Mary in Greenwich. A few years later they attended the coronation of Elizabeth, my Lord Henry in doublet of crimson satin laid with silver lace and lined with crimson sarsenet, with silver buttons, and in crimson velvet breeches lined with crimson satin, with points of black, white and red ribbon, a hat of crimson silk and silver, his rapier scabbard of crimson, with gilt spurs and velvet leathers of the same colour, and even shoes of crimson; my Lady Katherine, golden-haired, in a gown of cloth of gold with petticoat of crimson satin and shoes of crimson velvet. "My golden Lady" was Queen Elizabeth's greeting.

London and Court were but stations on this crimson Lord's circuit. During the reign of Mary and the first thirteen years of Queen Elizabeth he was nearly always on the move. In the main he was travelling either from London to Gloucestershire or from Gloucestershire to London. Going and coming might take some time, however, for it was his innate disposition to avoid lodging at common inns. He lodged in his journeys at the houses of gentlemen, his friends and acquaintances in dozens of places in the south and west, sometimes by bending his travels on the one hand, sometimes on the other. In later years he would stop at Baraper in Hampshire where Sir John Savage entertained, proceed to the hospitality of Mr. Peito at White Friars in Coventry, to Sir Thomas Russell's at Strensham or to Mr. Fielding's at Newnham, to his own houses at Caludon and Berkeley, to Norfolk in the days of his first wife, to the Barbican in London in the days of his second wife.

At first these were but the progresses of a young noble pursuing his pleasures, interrupted by occasional recession to the house of his mother-in-law at Castle Rising or to the old Duke of Nor-



folk's at Kenninghall, where Lord Henry and his wife boarded at ten shillings a week until funds were replenished. Later the travels were more often taken under colour of pleasure or ease to retire to a house of less capacity and expense. Once Lord Henry turned to "sojourning" to rid the family of his wife's ancient gentlewoman of popish inclinations, "not otherwise without an household storm to have been so calmly put off." At other times he would take to the road as a physic to cure his estates, to shake from his table and stable such as had made themselves menial servants without invitation and had no modesty in their abodes. Some of his tawny-coated followers were gentlemen and squires of notable families and of alliance to my Lord's house. Others who wore his livery and some who did not were sycophants from his own family and out of London, captains, scholars, poets, cast courtiers and the like, who assured my Lord and Lady that their income was more than could be spent. Even after Lord Henry had purged his retinue of stragglers he still had for many years as many as seventy of these liveried attendants, and only gradually was that number diminished.

That grand manner was more than Lord Henry's estates could support. For several years his expenditure had exceeded his income by £1,500 a year. Besides, pleasures at Court were blighted by Queen Elizabeth's coolness towards Lord and Lady Berkeley. Within a year after Elizabeth came to the throne Lord Henry, then twenty-five, began to turn from the town life of his youth to country friendships, and to give passive attention to the duties of a great landlord. By the thirteenth year of Elizabeth's reign he had become pretty definitely a Gloucestershire man. He was retreating to his home county laden with mortgages, pawns and statutes, but he gave little sign that they worried him. He set out for Caludon by way of Newmarket, Cambridge and Northampton. "The first work done was the sending for his buckhounds

to Yate in Gloucestershire. His hounds being come, away goes he and his wife a-progress of buck hunting to the parks of Barkwell, Groby, Bradgate, Leicester forest, Toley and others on that side of his house; and after a small repose, then to the parks of Kenilworth, Ashby, Wedgenock and others on the other side his house. And this was the course of this Lord, more or less, for the next thirty summers at least." "His chief delights wherein he spent near three parts of the year were, to his great charges, in hunting the hare, fox and deer, red and fallow, not wanting the choice of as good hunting horses as yearly he could buy at fairs in the north; and in hawking both at river and at land. And as his hounds were held inferior to no man's, through the great choice of whelps which with much care he yearly bred of his choicest braches and his continual huntings, so were his hawks of several sorts, which if he sent not a man to fetch from beyond seas, as three or four times I [Smyth] remember he did, yet had he the choice as soon as they were brought over into England, keeping a man lodging in London, in some years a month or more, to be sure of his choice at their first landing." Such living drained my Lord's coffers but did no harm to his health. He loved gaming and hunting, but not dissipation. Even in his last years he was not afflicted by gout, stone, aches or other griefs incident to age and common among his contemporaries. His friends knew him as a pleasure-loving man, but one who had no notorious vices.

Now that he was settled in Gloucestershire Lord Henry tarried in his hunting and hawking to preside in his dominions as a genial landlord should. He was an affable man, temperate in his talk and rather spare of speech because he could think more easily than he could express himself. In his dealings with his friends and his people he inclined towards pity, was ready to relieve, quick to forgive and be reconciled, and being reconciled would put aside all scruples and remnants of gall. He was a frank man; his face

was the frontispiece of his mind for he did not know how to dissemble a thought. For well-ordered, continual hospitality he equalled, if he did not outdo, all others in those parts where he lived, and was justly renowned for it in all the neighbourhood of his abodes. He moved among his people, distributing pottage with a piece of mutton or beef therein, half a cheat loaf and a can of beer, and sprinkling money from his purse. He kept his own Maunday day when he clothed poor men and women and sent alms to be distributed by gentlemen in the remoter parts of his barony. In times of festival, like Christmas, his neighbour townships, the gentlemen and ruralty were invited and feasted in his great hall with great port and solemnity. There would be extraordinary gilded dishes, the vanities of cooks' arts, things like a whole boar enclosed in a pale workmanly gilt by a cook hired from Bristol. My Lord in the midst of his dinner would rise and, going to each of the tables in the hall, cheerfully bid his guests welcome. "And his further order was, having guests of honour of remarkable rank that filled his own table, to seat himself at the lower end; and when such guests filled but half his board, and a meaner degree the rest of his table, then to seat himself the last of the first rank and the first of the latter, which commonly was about the midst of his long table, near the salt." Lord Henry fully understood the importance of keeping "the love of his country" when he so often called upon his neighbours and tenants to do him important services on juries. His deference to the obligations of his position was requited by the respect of his people. To be sure, customs of other centuries were no longer strictly observed. There had been a time when, if a peer passed through a parish, all the bells would be rung in honour of his person. Now, except on special occasions, the bells took no notice of the passage of eminency beneath them. But when Lord Henry returned from his progresses he would be met before he came to Berkeley town by

several hundred horse of his kindred, friends and tenants. And Lord Henry was the last of the Berkeleys to be honoured by such confluence of train.

Gradually Lord Henry realized that pastimes and ceremonials were but incidental to his position as Lord of Berkeley. He was no office seeker. He was content to glimmer in his own west country and leave others to dazzle in offices of state. It was a tradition in his family that the lords of Berkeley were, first of all, Gloucestershire men, that they owed their durability to their policy of enjoying the warmth of the Court at a moderate distance and not in too near or scorching an aspect. To the Queen he sent a New Year's gift of £10 in gold, and £5 from his wife, and to the Lord Keeper ten old angels. Other great officers of state, privy councillors, judges and lawyers he remembered with lamprey pies, salmon, red and fallow venison and other small tokens. That was the simpler way, at least to Lord Henry who did not understand the fussiness and responsibility of official life. Yet Lord Berkeley in any age could hardly avoid duties in local government. Lord Henry was lord lieutenant of Gloucestershire with his steward to assist him; he was justice of the peace for Gloucestershire and other counties with Thomas Duport as his mainstay and Smyth a constant adviser, "whereby his own unaptness was less perceived." Under the circumstances those offices could not have been bothersome.

But Lord Henry's personal affairs were beginning to fasten upon him. He was discovering that the management of vast properties was something that a lord could not shirk year after year. His affairs were not in hopeless state, but debts had accumulated and his brisk mother was no longer alive to do his thinking. Things did need straightening out; and, to my Lord's dismay, he found that straightening things out was a life-long process. To compensate for the expansive mode of life in his earlier years

and for costly lawsuits in which he was becoming involved, Lord Henry sold lands to the value of £41,000. Lord Henry also instituted, possibly at the suggestion of his orderly stewards, a system of accounts for both his household and his manors. Besides that he drew up his own account book of the money which he took from his estate and how he paid it out again either to one of the officers of his household or, if he wished to conceal the reasons for an expenditure, to his purse.

That would have been a happy solution for easy-going Lord Henry if all he had to do was to keep accounts and to sell lands to meet his debts. But he had only to look down from Berkeley Castle on Berkeley town to see what his ancestors had sown and time had reaped. Along some of the streets of Berkeley stood only ruins of old houses, demolishments of the Wars of the Roses; down by Castle Mill where in other days barks of forty tons had been laden and unladen, the little river from Nibley now flowed unruffled into the Severn. The rent of the town was but half what it had formerly been. The hundredors of Berkeley, too, still smarted from the effects of the Wars of the Roses. The dissolution of the monasteries and the resumption of chantry lands had brought on a plague of legal bickering. Older than the Wars of the Roses was the struggle with the Severn. Washing the shore of the hundred of Berkeley for about eighteen miles, indifferent to deed and tenure, the old river usually changed its course once in twenty years. Old rights must be reviewed and rents revised to appease the riparians. In other places leases and agreements, made while the lands had been held by Henry VII and his heirs, were unsatisfactory sometimes to the lord, sometimes to the tenant. The descendants of the Warwicks and Lisles were moving back to the district around Wotton and had renewed the paper warfare at Westminster Hall with a volley of briefs and an imposing array of wrangling lawyers and courtiers. Still numerous, too, were the

parcels of land, some of them in Lord Henry's time worth from fifteen to twenty-five shillings an acre in rent, that were returning from twopence to a shilling because lords in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries had desired fixed rents and had entailed those holdings to their tenants. All through his estates Lord Henry was constantly making adjustments, here by enclosure despite "rural reluctance," there by making parcels of a sizeable holding, elsewhere by combining parcels into a larger rent, sometimes arranging compositions, all the time attacking and defending with the law.

To be sure Lord Henry escaped the tedium of actual supervision of his lands. He had in Smyth of Nibley an able, loyal steward of the hundred of Berkeley. Smyth understood the legal and financial problems of Berkeley. He knew the terrain to its very nooks; he knew more about the history of the land and its people than Lord Henry would ever have the patience to acquire. Smyth had the knowledge to administer the estates without Lord Berkeley's help, and probably did much of the time. Lord and Lady Berkeley had taken him into their household as a raw country lad and had reared, educated and trained him for just that end. Even so, whether he would or no, Lord Henry must go through the form of making final decisions, especially upon many legal matters. Lord Henry was a man of many friends, easily influenced, often susceptible to the advice of the last person who had had his ear, even simple and trusting in the hands of his enemies. Several times he was so bewildered by the urbane manners of those who intended him no good that he credited gossip against faithful servants without hearing the accused, and once or twice lost the services of a good man. If he was fortunate in his choice of sound men, like Smyth of Nibley and several others, he was quite as likely to pick up rascally counsel like Edward Andrews who sold my Lord's evidence to the opposing side, of incompetent solicitors like

bottle-nosed Henry Grantham. One solicitor was so confounded by some of my Lord's old deeds and parchments that he could not interpret them at all and burned them lest they turn out to be damaging. Fortunately the devoted and skilful servants were able to repair or circumvent many of Lord Henry's mistakes.

Just as Lord Henry had complacently turned from the royal unfriendliness in London and settled himself in Gloucestershire, so too he tranquilly submitted to the task of tending to his affairs. He did not give up his hunting and he did not become highly competent in handling business matters, but he did steady himself. As regularity crept into his life, his household became correspondingly more orderly. The stragglers and parasites of his munificent days disappeared, and the number of his liveried servants was reduced, sometimes by twenty or forty at a clip. The household was still well staffed with attendants; few peers were served by better qualified gentlemen and yeomen. The steward of the household was responsible for administration and had power to discharge any servants except the cooks, huntsmen and falconers. Lord Henry reserved jurisdiction over the cooks for the sake of hospitality, and over the huntsmen and falconers because he would not have servants meddling with his pleasures. The steward also passed upon the admission of strangers at the gate, unless they happened to be gentlemen of good sort. In that case the porter was to admit them without further ado.

My Lord drew up regulations for the guidance of his attendants. The gentleman usher put in appearance at seven on summer mornings or at eight on winter mornings and assumed general direction of household service for the day. He was accountable for the conduct of gentlemen attendants and yeomen. He must see that the gentlemen attendants went to chapel in the morning and that they reported to the dining chamber on time, properly dressed and not without their liveries or cloaks. He was also to take care that

they refrained from entering the buttery or cellar without permission and that they behaved themselves "decently without noise or uncivil behaviour." If the gentleman usher found it necessary to hush the gentlemen attendants while my Lord and his guests were dining, the gentlemen attendants were not to scoff and jest at the usher. My Lord when he rode abroad expected the gentlemen to ride before, two by two, without lewd speech or rudeness. The yeomen, in charge of a yeoman usher, were to attend my Lady when she rode, and they were to keep together instead of loitering and scattering. In passing through a village they must ride decently two by two. Within the house the yeomen were to strew rushes daily in the dining chamber and keep dogs out of that room; to take out spots from the carpets, chairs and stools; to dust the cushions; to light fires in the chimneys in the winter and to put flowers in the windows in the summer. At least one of the yeomen must remain in attendance to remove stools, snuff lights and light gentlemen strangers to their chambers.

Thus was orderliness attained. In the early days of this Lord there had been too many servants commanders in this family, few under obedience. Now my Lord ruled. It was a kindly rule but with an air of dignity and greatness that he did not allow his servants to overlook. He knew that the master's awe was often the level of his servants' life and manners. The master of a country family must sometimes carry himself familiarly with his flock; but the master of a great family, attended by servants of better quality and more gentle education and employment, could in his deportment retain a more awful greatness befitting his state. Even Smyth of Nibley, who was as close to the family as if he had been born into it, never failed to respect the station from which my Lord looked down.

The orderliness of Lord Henry's household was not always maintained by his Lady, but its dignity suffered no whit by her.



Lady Katherine would have been a queen in any surroundings, as Smyth's miniature of her shows. "Of stature this Lady was somewhat tall, of complexion lovely both in the spring and autumn of her life, but a little inclining towards an high colour; her hair somewhat yellowish; of pace the most stately and upright at all times of her age that ever I beheld; of stomach great and haughty, no way diminishing the greatness of her birth and marriage by omission of any ceremony at diet or public prayers, whose book I have usually observed presented to her with the lowest curtsies that might be and on the knees of her gentlewoman; of great expense and bounty beyond the means of continuance; of speech passing eloquent and ready, whom in many years I could never observe to misplace or seem to recall one mistaken, misplaced or mispronounced word or syllable; and as ready and significant under her pen, forty of whose letters at least at several times I have received; her invention as quick as her first thoughts and her words as ready as her invention; skilful in French but perfect in the Italian tongue wherein she most desired her daughters to be instructed. At the lute she played admirably and in her private chamber would often sing thereto, to the ravishment of the hearers which to her knowledge were seldom more than one or two of her gentlewomen; howbeit I have known of divers of her servants secretly hearkening under her windows and at her chamber door, whom her husband hath sometimes there found and privately stayed amongst them."

Lady Katherine was sixteen when she married Lord Henry. For some years she was his constant companion as he sported about the countryside, entering into all manner of pleasures befitting her birth and calling. She often went with her husband part of those hunting journeys, "delighting her crossbow; kept commonly a cast or two of merlins, which sometimes she mewed in her own chamber, which falconry cost her husband each year one or two

gowns and kirtles spoiled by their mutings; used her long bow and was in those days amongst her servants so good an archer at butts as her side by her was not the weaker." Smyth had seen her bows, arrows, gloves, bracer, scarf and other ladylike accommodations and had heard her speak of them in later years. Industrious Lady Anne, mother of Lord Henry, who betimes in winter and summer mornings would make her housewifely walks to inspect her stables, barns, day house, poultry and swinetroughs, was much concerned over the playfulness of her daughter-in-law. "By God's blessed sacrament, this gay girl will beggar my son Henry," Lady Anne exclaimed to her gentlewoman, Anne Gastrell.

With the passing of the years Lady Katherine did not take more kindly to housewifery, but there were changes in her ways. After her husband's misfortunes at law began to mount and after the beheading of her brother, the Duke of Norfolk, she retired to her chamber. Thence she came forth only at set hours for her daily walks in garden, park and other solitary places, attended by her gentleman usher and gentlewomen at their appointed distances. She resumed the study of Latin and would call upon Smyth to help her with it. When Smyth was in London he would frequently get commissions from her to purchase books, such as Cicero's *Sentences*. After a time Lady Katherine turned to natural philosophy and astronomy. Smyth bought her a globe, Blagrave's mathematical jewel, a quadrante, compass, rule and other instruments.

My Lady's researches were not always purely philosophical. In the forest of Arden there dwelt an old man named Bourne, reputed by many to be a conjuror and foreteller of events. Lady Katherine could not resist the temptation to send by John Bott, her servant, a letter to Bourne. Bott was instructed to see the letter burned and to bring Bourne's answer in writing. Bott opened Lady Katherine's letter and kept it, but delivered the contents

orally to the wizard. Some years later Bott's accounts were found to be awry and Lord Henry discharged him. Bott appealed to a gentlewoman of Lady Katherine, threatening that unless he was cleared in the matter of his accounts, he would make the contents of my Lady's letter to Bourne known to the authorities. Lady Katherine asked to see the letter. Bott decided that it would be safer to submit a copy to one of the gentlewomen. He requested Smyth, then a lad of eighteen recently come to the Berkeley household, to make the copy. As Smyth transcribed, he began to suspect; his suspicions were confirmed by further inklings presumably picked up among the servants. Smyth then hurried to Bott's chamber, seized the original letter and burned it. In the meantime Lady Katherine had read the copy and had hastened to pay the price of obtaining the original by making peace between her husband and Bott. But that done, Bott was unable to complete his bargain by delivery of the original letter. Thereupon he was accused of having started a scandal and was summarily dismissed. Young Smyth kept silent and, until he entered the story in his history many years later, the Berkeley family was considerably mystified at the strange dénouement of Bott's plot.

Such were Lady Katherine's amusements. Her duty, as she saw it, was to preside in regal fashion over her west-country court. Perhaps she tried to compensate herself for the disfavour she experienced at the Court of Queen Elizabeth by insisting the more rigidly upon recognition of her great place at home. For awing of her family and education of youth she had no compeer, Smyth testified. Smyth's earliest memories of Lady Berkeley took him back to a morning shortly after his arrival, a country boy, at the Berkeley household. He was carrying breakfast to his young master, Thomas. He chanced to meet Lady Berkeley and in his haste made her a hurried curtsy. She called him to her and compelled him to do a hundred "legs," all the while giving him instruc-

tion and lifting her garments to demonstrate. Despite his criticisms, to the end of his days Smyth entertained the liveliest respect for her.

Even my Lord was not exempt before the determination of her high-flying spirits, and Smyth commended him for his success in living so peaceably with her. She liked to meddle more than she ought and, if she was not kept informed of everything, she might dismiss servants harshly. She went so far as to require the grooms of her husband's chamber to tell her of his speeches, dispatches and plans. It was not her nature merely to pry into things, but the grey mare thought she was the better horse, as the hundredors would put it. To Lady Katherine's mind, justifiably enough Smyth admitted, Lord Henry was given to plodding on many changes of devices, to leaving off his lawsuits with an imagination that out of his own judgment he could conclude a more profitable end. "These imaginations you know have not produced the best effects," she wrote to Smyth.

She dreaded to have Lord Henry go to London on his law businesses, where crafty courtiers would lay baits that would be swallowed with danger. In the dealings with the Warwicks and Lisles, Lady Berkeley trusted Lord Henry's talents so little that she tried to have the whole question referred to arbiters. Another time when one of Lord Henry's solicitors had advised him to default in a suit rather than to risk trial of his title to disputed lands, Lady Katherine disdained any such timid policy, persuaded one of my Lord's special counsel to her viewpoint, prodded my Lord into court and saw him lose the title to his enemies as his solicitor had predicted. Friends advised Lord Henry to accept the offer of the Earls of Warwick and Leicester to settle the old feud by a marriage between their nephews, the Sidneys, and Lord Henry's daughters; but with her womanish power Lady Katherine indignantly quashed that motion. In Smyth's opinion, my Lady

was too powerful for the success of good counsel, one of those English wives who challenged more liberty and inclined to more sovereignty than did those of other nations. It was true that Lord Henry loved the law too much for a man who knew so little about it, but Lady Katherine's courage had more vanity than sense in it—the vanity of her fading greatness.

Lady Berkeley was not helpful, either, to a lord who was pestered by his own extravagances. In the first years of her marriage she had been allowed what she called for and spent. That, the accounts eventually showed, was more than the family revenues could sustain. To amend this condition Lady Katherine had herself appointed receiver-general for her husband's affairs, to whom all officers foreign and domestic submitted their accounts. That proved even more unprofitable and soon blasted. At length she was allowed £300 a year for her apparel and chamber. In addition few fines were raised from Lord Henry's tenants and never any land sold but she had a sixth, eighth or tenth of the amount, unknown to her husband, and to the distress of the officials who made those collections. Lord Henry also had to pay when his Lady piped for special luxuries. Once to humour "the greatness of his wife's mind" Lord Berkeley purchased a lute of mother of pearl for which Queen Elizabeth herself had offered one hundred marks. To settle for it he granted the vendor, one Best, an annuity of three pounds a year for life.

Apparently Lord Henry was willing to humour his wife. Lady Katherine had short patience with her Lord's tractability in the hands of his opponents and the Lord excused himself to Smyth with the explanation that his Lady suffered from lofty obduracy, but Lord and Lady Berkeley were content with one another. Their only disappointment was that they had no male heir. Lady Katherine had borne six children of whom only two daughters survived. As the years went by her hopes of maintaining the male line

dimmed. At length she consulted Francis Aylworth, a gentleman who had lived for many years in one of her houses, a little old "werish" man, but excellently read and practised chirurgeon and physician. Aylworth promised that if Lord Henry and Lady Katherine would be ruled by him, they should have a son. So certain was Aylworth that he wagered Lady Katherine ten pounds against her thirty. "Carry Aylworth his thirty pound," she rejoiced from her bed when Thomas was born a year later.

Lady Katherine lived to give instructions, with her usual firmness, for the negotiations of the marriage of Thomas to Elizabeth Carey. Not long after that wedding Lady Katherine died, in 1596. While Lord Henry remained in mourning at Caludon, her elaborate funeral in Coventry did fitting homage to the stateliness with which she had carried herself in life. The great procession from the seventy poor women in mourning gowns and Holland kerchiefs to the chief gentlemen of the county and their ladies, the Mayor of Coventry, the sheriffs and the aldermen, would have satisfied Lady Katherine. After chaplain Edward Cowper had pronounced her a Lady never known to dissemble or heard to swear, after young Thomas Berkeley had been invested by Garter King at Arms with the honour of his mother and had accepted the banners, after the steward and gentleman usher had come forward to break their rods over the coffin of their late mistress, the company returned to the funeral feast where they were so plentifully provided that more than a thousand poor people were fed as well.

Lord Henry was left to face the Warwicks and Lisles, alone. Or almost alone, for his marriage to his second wife, Lady Jane, was little more than formality. She remained for the most part in her house at the Barbican in London while Lord Henry lived on at Caludon. Neither of them meddled with the other's property or affairs. Thomas, now Sir Thomas, was of no help. He was in

ill health, travelled a good deal on the continent, interested himself little in Lord Henry's troubles and that little with unfortunate results, and spent so freely beyond his means that his household was put under a code of regulations to be jointly administered by Smyth of Nibley and Lady Elizabeth, wife of Sir Thomas. At least Lady Katherine had fought, if not always by Lord Henry's side and not always wisely, for the Berkeley heritage.

Lord Henry was sixty-two when Lady Katherine died. As he reviewed the interminable lawsuits and the little success he had made towards recovering the disputed estates, he felt frustrated. Schooled by his own errors to a greater understanding of these wretched legal trivialities and enormities, he could look back and realize how damaging had been his mother's decision to refuse to take a new grant from Queen Mary. For even while Lord Henry was recovering the Berkeley possessions and entering upon the estates of his ancestors, John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, was accused of treason and beheaded. John Dudley was also Earl of Warwick and Viscount Lisle in his own right. He was the son of Elizabeth Grey through whom the Lisles had handed down the disputed titles to Berkeley property. By Northumberland's death for treason all his property was forfeited to Queen Mary. The Queen's counsel promptly brought action of intrusion against Lord Henry for Wotton, Symonds Hall and all the other parcels that the Lisles had claimed. Thus though Lord Henry had recovered his estates but four years before from Queen Mary, he was now enforced to defend his right to Wotton and other parts of Berkeley hundred or, if he could not, he was liable for all the rents and fines he had collected during his wrongful entry upon them. Queen Mary, as we have seen, was kindly disposed towards Lord Henry and did not push the matter to trial. It is probable that Lord Henry by a reasonable composition could have come to a satisfactory settlement of the whole issue. Queen Mary died

before an agreement was reached. Queen Elizabeth's Treasurer of the Household speedily renewed the action for intrusion against Lord Henry. He too was for a time dissuaded from pushing the matter; the dissuasion took the form of a lease to one of the valuable manors under dispute, which temporarily blinded him and bound his hands.

In this manner the title slept for several years. Lord Henry continued in possession of the manors but had not satisfied the claim of the Crown against them. At any moment he might be called upon to answer his intrusion. That moment came when Queen Elizabeth had Lady Katherine's brother, the Duke of Norfolk, beheaded. The Queen was not in a friendly mood towards relatives of the late Duke of Norfolk. Furthermore, Lady Katherine kept popish gentlewomen in her service, a habit which had several times come to official notice and was once the cause of a letter from Archbishop Whitgift to Lord Henry, remonstrating on the disposition of Lady Berkeley's servants to overlook conformity to religion. Queen Elizabeth had also always distrusted Lord Henry because he and his mother had been in such favour with Queen Mary. There were courtiers prepared to take advantage of Queen Elizabeth's unfriendliness. Ambrose, Earl of Warwick, and Robert, Earl of Leicester, were sons of the Duke of Northumberland who had been beheaded in Queen Mary's reign. They could petition the Queen to restore to them that portion of the Berkeley barony which their father had forfeited to the Crown by his attainder. And their petition was likely to meet with friendly reception, for Leicester was the Queen's favourite and already had a promise in writing under the Queen's hand that he should have the Berkeley lands. Ambrose's wife, Anne, Countess of Warwick, was in constant attendance on her Majesty.

No more dallying for Lord Henry. Action for intrusion into the manors of Wotton and Symonds Hall was brought in the Ex-



chequer. There while the Earl of Leicester and divers other courtiers looked on to give the cause countenance, judgment was awarded against Lord Henry. He was ordered to surrender the manors to the Queen and to pay some £5,000 for the profits he had collected from them during his occupancy. Meanwhile all the other lands of Lord Henry were seized by the sheriff until his debt to the Queen should be paid. For the best part of a year Lord Henry and Lady Katherine remained in London, petitioners to the Queen for a pardon of this enormous debt. Once when Lady Katherine was on her knees before the Queen, her Majesty replied, "No, no, my Lady Berkeley, we know you will never love us for the death of your brother." The Berkeleys did get their pardon. The price was £500 to the Queen and £1,800 distributed in ten weeks at Court. In order to comply Lord Henry had to mortgage many of his remaining manors, and after that was over he was no longer in possession of Wotton and Symonds Hall.

As soon as the judgment had been awarded against Lord Berkeley and the manors surveyed, Queen Elizabeth granted Wotton and Symonds Hall to the Earl of Warwick and the Earl of Leicester. With a great train of attendants Leicester came to Wotton to take possession. Country people thronged to see him until the old borough bulged and everybody said it was like Bartholomew Fair in London. The Earl led his party to Michaelwood Lodge, breaking down the palings of the park there; thence he proceeded to Wotton Hill where he signalized his entry with a game of stowball. His family name was Dudley and his title was Leicester, but everybody in Berkeley hundred understood that the descendants of the Lises had come back again. Within the same year another spectacle convinced the west-country people that Leicester was as powerful as he was reputed. Not long after Leicester had capered on Wotton Hill Queen Elizabeth came to visit him at Kenilworth.

At his suggestion she broke her journey with a stay at Berkeley Castle. Her party made havoc among Lord Henry's herd of stately red deer in the Worthy. After the Queen's departure Lord Henry, in a fit of passion, disparked that enclosure. Her Majesty heard of Lord Henry's act and sent him word that he had better take heed how he repined at her visit, for the Earl of Leicester who had lately recovered Wotton also had taken a liking to Berkeley Castle and affirmed good title to it.

Leicester had by no means finished with the Berkeleys. By schemes and lawsuits he nibbled at the Berkeley estates and loaded Lord Henry with debts that held him in bondage for thirteen years. But in a few years Leicester died and the lands went to brother Ambrose, Earl of Warwick. Warwick died leaving the lands to his Countess, Anne. The deaths relieved Lord Henry but little, for it was said of the Countess of Warwick that her influence at the Court of Queen Elizabeth was great enough to work miracles in lay matters.

Certainly my Lord had no reason to doubt the Countess's prowess. For years he exhausted his funds in countless lawsuits but he could make little headway. The whole hundred was disquieted. Some of the gentry supported the Countess by bringing suits of their own against Lord Berkeley. Other gentry and some of my Lord's tenants resisted the Countess. Often faithful tenants of Lord Henry were summoned and committed for adhering to him. To help them and himself Lord Henry exhibited a world of bills, amassed injunctions, orders and affidavits. The Countess countered with indictments and Star Chamber actions for entries and riots. Juries could not be selected without embroiling the whole neighbourhood for some time before and after. And in the packing of juries, as in other things, the Countess proved smarter than her adversary. Between times Lord Henry and his servants had to answer processes from the King's Bench and give bonds to keep

the peace. Once or twice at the instigation of the Countess, Lord Henry was called before the Privy Council to answer trivial misdemeanours. My Lord was convinced that the pressure on him was far more violent than was usual in such circumstances.

At last he tried another petition to the Queen. He found out what he already knew, that the Countess of Warwick was still at Court and that what she would, she obtained. Persistently my Lord moved the Exchequer to review the judgments against him on the ground of error. For a long while his plea was unheeded but late in Elizabeth's reign the judges ruled that there had been an error. They also ruled that they could do nothing about it until Lord Henry had petitioned the Queen for a writ of error and she had granted it. The Countess then brought her final suit against Lord Henry. She won, but Lord Henry appealed the verdict to the King's Bench, with Croke, Doddridge and Coke as counsel. While the suit was adjourned on account of the plague, the Countess died. By her will she conveyed all the disputed Berkeley lands to Robert Lord Sidney, later Viscount Lisle.

These were Lord Henry's reminiscences at the age of seventy as he found himself, after years of fruitless resistance, facing a new Lisle. Viscount Lisle was young and fresh. Lord Henry was weary; he had had enough. He would keep what land he had. When his son, Sir Thomas, became Lord Berkeley, let him renew the court battles if he could. This mood was not pleasing to my Lord's dependable servants. They had laboured in his causes, some of them almost as many years as had my Lord. Again and again one or another of them had steered my Lord clear of the trickery of his enemies. Some of them had even risked their own estates and pledged portions of their property to his service. Among these was Smyth of Nibley and he was easily the most important of my Lord's servants by now. He had completed twenty years in Lord Henry's service; he had grown annually more proficient and in-

valuable in his duties as steward; for years he had been searching and gathering in official and private collections every deed, document and lawsuit that had any bearing on this history of the Berkeleys and their lands; he had long been dissatisfied with Lord Henry's solicitors, for he knew that they had often lacked documents they needed or had not known how to use what they had. Besides Smyth had been quietly investigating the history of many of Lord Henry's unfortunate suits. From a former solicitor to the late Earls of Warwick and Leicester Smyth had obtained a cloakbag full of deeds and other papers, some of which had been purloined from Lord Berkeley, some of which Smyth now blithely filched from Lisle, others of which illuminated questionable practices on the part of my Lord's enemies. From numerous gentlemen and tenants who had served on juries and otherwise participated in the lawsuits, even from innkeepers and many another unlikely source, he had pieced together a great deal of useful information. Smyth was ready to confound witnesses, juries, counsel and judges with armfuls of documents that would gush from cloakbags, trunks and any other receptacle in which he could pack them to court. He was full of knowledge; he was sure of himself; he was eager to show what he could do.

Lord Henry was impressed. At Smyth's suggestion he called a conference of friends and counsel. Having listened to what Smyth proposed to do, they advised Lord Henry to proceed at once under Smyth's direction. Surrounded by these enthusiastic friends and servants Lord Henry wavered in his resolution to do no more. He was too old for the hunt now, but he could still dice with skill. Smyth could remember how Lord Henry had one day played one of his yeomen for threepence a game and had had the game in such assurance that ambs ace (alms ace) would have won for him; but he had turned to the onlookers and asked if they would see him lose the game by casting less than ambs ace. And that my

Lord did by throwing one die on top of the other, with the ace peep upwards on the top die. Well, his slender lady-like hand could still handle a die as well as any of his rank and time. Let Smyth instruct the lawyers and call the whole lump of land that had been lost by him in question. He would throw for it all, once more.

This time Lord Henry won. Viscount Lisle was an able man and he had a good understanding of the law. He realized that he could not block Smyth's mass attack. He knew that Smyth had obtained some of the papers from a former solicitor, knew that he did not have the material to answer all of Smyth's evidence, knew that certain acts of the late Earl of Leicester and Countess Lisle were not easily defended. Viscount Lisle signified that he was willing to arbitrate. For a composition of £7,320 Lisle surrendered all claim to the lands that had been wrested from Lord Henry during Elizabeth's reign. In December, 1608, on Westridge Hill, the most conspicuous place in those disputed lands, four attorneys drew up the deed of conveyance in the presence of the Mayor of Wotton and thirty-three other witnesses. Numerous others stood by to see what curious thing the men of law were now about. Here the pact was signed which, after nearly two centuries of conflict, delivered to the Berkeleys the lands of their ancestors. More than four times the value of the inheritance of those lands had been expended by both parties to that fight. Somehow the end seemed altogether too simple. Probably not one of the country people who looked on believed that the parchment was worth the trouble of its composition, that the Lisles were actually turning their backs on Berkeley hundred.

Possibly not even Lord Henry put too much trust in this conclusion. In the four remaining years of his life, however, nothing happened to remind him of his long vexation in the courts. The death of Lord Henry's son, Sir Thomas, did not threaten the

new peace of the Berkeley patrimony because a grandson, George, would succeed. Lord Henry contentedly passed his last years chatting long hours with Smyth about the history of the Berkeleys that the latter was writing. Out of his own memory he could fill in details as far back as the reign of Henry VIII. He and Smyth chuckled too as they recollected the furious encounters my Lord had had with the late Countess of Warwick. Amongst other things Lord Henry liked to recall how often Sir Edward Coke had befriended him in court, even when many other eminent men at law would give him no quarter. Now on the eve of his death Lord Henry happily gave in marriage his granddaughter, Theophila, to Sir Robert Coke, son of Sir Edward. Sir Edward himself came to Berkeley, composed Latin verses and shed tears at the ceremony. Afterwards as he and Lord Henry were riding towards Cirencester they were thrown out of the coach. Both escaped injury and were rather proud that such elderly men could come through that experience so well. But Lord Henry's day was at hand. A few months later he was so pleased with some custards the cook had made that he ate too many of them and died of the surfeit. He might not have liked the title that his biographer gave him, Henry the Harmless, but he would have been pleased to hear his tenants about his coffin declare that he had been the best landlord in all England.

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